# THE NEW-CHURCH REVIEW

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## THE NEW-CHURCH REVIEW

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THE
NEW-CHURCH REVIEW

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# THE GROWTH OF RELIGIOUS LIBERTY

BY THE REV. LOUIS A. DOLE

THE one hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of American Independence leads us naturally to consider anew the meaning of our national watch-word "Liberty," its implications, its scope, the basis of its attainment, and the conditions of its development. Nor has there ever been a time when a clear understanding of the character of liberty was more needed than today; never a time when the word was more commonly and carelessly used, or when more crimes and misdemeanors were committed in its name. The propagandist, in advocating his own special cause, is prone to adopt the dictionary definition of liberty as "freedom from restraint or compulsion"; yet he is unwilling to apply this definition to causes which he himself does not favor; and the most superficial examination shows that it is not a satisfactory one. The fact is that the word "liberty" is an abstract noun, and the definition is negative in character, and unless qualified, it means anything or nothing. The founders of the American Republic began to qualify it when they framed the Constitution; and the entire history of the American nation has been a continuous process of defining this term. Every law that we make is an added qualification. It would be amusing, if it were not so serious, to note what assertions are made in the name of the Constitution by people who are obviously ignorant of its whole purport. In its name, many people condemn a new law with as

much confidence as if they were uttering an idea, when they are only giving voice to an emotion; and one might characterize much of the so-called "current thought" as heat without light.

This use—or rather misuse—of the word "liberty" carries a strong appeal; for we are all selfish, and consequently like to think that we are exercising "personal liberty" when we do what suits our individual desires. It takes no great intellect, but the mere honest facing of facts, to recognize that the exercise of one man's "personal liberty," in this sense, necessarily involves the curtailing of some other man's "personal liberty," for self-interests always conflict; and that national liberty cannot be built up on such an interpretation.

An individual cast away on an uninhabited island might perhaps exercise this type of personal liberty; but as soon as two or more persons attempt to live together, there arises the necessity for restraint of the individual to promote the common freedom; and the larger the group the smaller the field for independent life. This may perhaps be more clearly brought out by diagrams. In Figure I, A and B

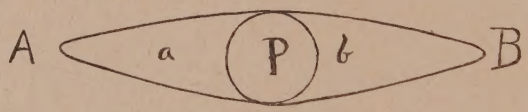


FIG. I.

represent two persons interested in a common purpose; a and b represent their fields of independent activity; and the area P, common to both, represents the field where their interests center, and where they must act with mutual interdependence and co-operation. Now suppose we add four other individuals having the same common purpose, as in Figure II. The central area P remains the same, except that there are more individuals to be considered, but the areas marked x show how new relationships further curtail the fields of independent action. Figure III shows how rapidly these independent fields diminish with the introduc-

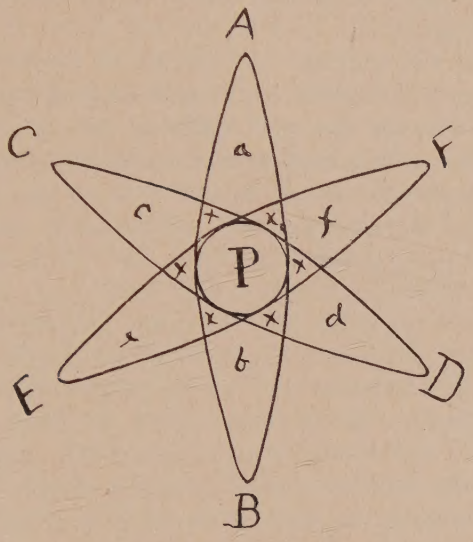


FIG. II.

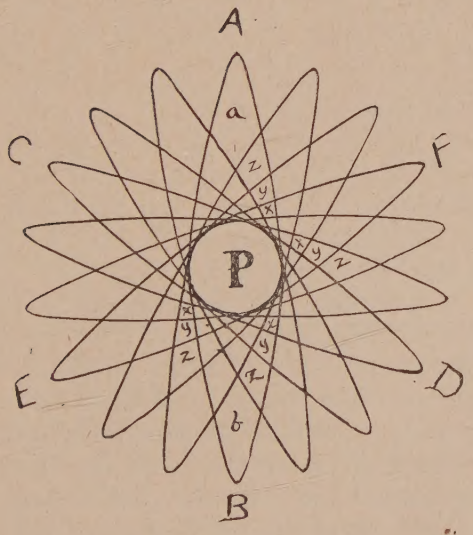


FIG. III.

tion of new individuals, the area of interdependence tend-

ing to approach a circle into which the fields of independent action disappear.

Laws are the concrete formulation of the essential principles under which social life is possible and the social welfare may advance freely. Applying the diagrams to the social welfare, the central area P would represent the common welfare of the race. In that area certain unchanging fundamental laws must obtain, which apply equally to all men of whatever rank or nation. These laws are the second table of the Decalogue. The areas x, y, and z would represent international, interstate, and community welfare. Each of these fields must be governed by a code of law developing the fundamental laws in greater detail, to make possible specific relationships. Thus we have a growing body of law, which tends to bring the whole field of human activity under its control; and we get a definition of liberty quite the opposite of that which we first quoted from the dictionary, namely, "Liberty is obedience to law." That is to say, liberty from the egoistic point of view, "freedom from restraint," is an utter impossibility in group life.

The American nation was founded on the belief that the primary object of government was to promote the general welfare rather than individual license; and with the increase of population and the division of labor the individual has become more and more an integral part of the social body, and his sphere of independent activity has diminished correspondingly. Individual rights which could be granted with safety and with advantage to the social body in 1776, can no longer be permitted. In the interests of public health many laws restraining the individual have been passed. It has been found necessary to make an elementary education compulsory, since the responsibilities of a democracy cannot be carried by an illiterate population; and other laws have been passed which interfere with the former rights of a parent to control his children. Labor laws have been fought from the beginning on the ground that they interfere with personal rights; and yet we recognize that they have been necessary. The whole history of the American

experiment is proof that our idea of liberty must advance to higher and higher levels.

This is true in the individual as well as in the social life. Every time we control some desire in the interests of a higher purpose, we give evidence that we are seeking freedom on a higher level. We seek physical freedom by learning the laws of health and obeying them. But physical freedom is not all. We train our minds by rigid discipline until they are capable of performing the services for which we wish to use them. But we cannot stop there. If we use our minds and our bodies for selfish ends, in opposition to the Divine Providence, we are still slaves. True freedom belongs primarily to the will, and is found only when the will is brought into harmony with the Divine Will. Thus a truer definition of liberty should combine the first and second definitions: "Liberty is obedience to law from love to the Lord and to the neighbor."

It is significant that the declaration of a new religious liberty should have antedated the declaration of political liberty in America by a few years. In his work on the Last Judgment, Swedenborg published the statement that because of this event mankind was to enjoy a new state of spiritual freedom. The foundation of the American Republic was among the first fruits of this spiritual enfranchisement, one of the first attempts to embody the new impetus in practical life. We are accustomed to regard the Declaration of Independence as epoch-making, but in fact the epoch was made by the prior declaration of Swedenborg. For religious freedom is interior to all other forms of freedom; and the interior history of the world is a history of the growth of religious liberty.

The dictionary defines religion as "the feeling or expression of human love, fear, or awe of God by belief, by the observance of ceremonies, by conduct in life"; that is, it involves love, thought, and conduct. This makes us recall Swedenborg's statement that all religion is of the life. A general view of history shows that in every age the pre-

vailing concept of God has been the determining factor. The modern world, with its tendency to deny the existence of a personal God and to exalt humanitarianism to the status of a religion, should take warning from the fate of some nations in the past. It remains true that "the nation that will not serve Thee shall perish." Religion and life are inseparable; and the Christian religion is conformity in faith and in life to the precepts of the Word.

A prevailing fallacy is clearly expressed in one of the published tenets of a popular modern cult, which is, somewhat abbreviated, as follows: "Neither acceptance nor denial of any theological doctrine is a disqualification for membership. Religion is devotion to the highest moral ends. The first Reformation discarded the Church and relied on the Bible. The second reformation accepts the decrees of conscience as supreme." This is equivalent to saying that a man has no need of God, and it is therefore the exact opposite of religion, for "the whole of religion is founded on the idea of God, and follows according to it." The idea that such statements are in any sense a manifestation of religious liberty is false. They are in fact the blank reverse side of the picture; they represent the complete vastation of the old, rather than acceptance of the new. Religious liberty is not the liberty to do without religion. With every addition to knowledge there comes a larger responsibility; and the shirking of that responsibility causes men to fall lower than they have been before. Religious toleration, the permission to worship as one chooses or not to worship at all, may be essential to the development of religious liberty; but it is not that liberty. Religious liberty comes from the right use of this permission; and nothing but bondage, from its misuse. The spiritual growth of the race demands the gradual removal of much arbitrary compulsion. The fact that many external restraints which formerly held people to church attendance have now been removed is not to be deplored; but this does not make it praiseworthy or excusable for anyone to discard religion

and the Church; and no one who does discard religion and the Church should be allowed for a moment to think that he is advancing the cause of religious liberty.

Religious liberty is doing the Lord's will from love. We gain it only by learning the precepts of the Word and obeying them until they become voluntary. The more clearly we understand the precepts of the Word, provided we are trying to live according to them, the freer we become. The successive ages have been marked by increasingly clear revelations of the Lord and of man's relation to Him, accompanied by a corresponding religious decline among those who refused to take advantage of the new truth. Religious freedom always consists in being led by the Lord; but this leadership advances to higher and higher planes of the mind as regeneration progresses, growing from blind obedience to conscious co-operation with the Divine plan. With the Jewish Church the Lord's covenant was one of simple obedience; they were led to keep His Commandments through fear or in the interests of self-advantage. They were promised that if they would keep His Commandments, blessings would come upon them; but if they disobeyed, they would be consumed by famine, pestilence, and the sword. In the beginning of each man's life, self-interest makes a strong appeal; compulsion has its part in the development of liberty with everyone. But as man advances in obedience to the Word, he is prepared for a deeper understanding of it, and for the closer touch with God as revealed in the Gospels. So in the Christian Church, we find a distinct advance in religious freedom, based upon a more interior knowledge, and a higher appeal. The disciples and early Christians were still partially influenced by considerations of self-advantage; but they also had a perception of the qualities in the Lord and the power that went forth from Him, and they followed Him from devotion to Him and from recognition of His Divine virtues. It is significant that He gave them, as He repeatedly told them, all the light they could receive and many glimpses of truth which they could not

comprehend, but which He promised should be revealed to later generations. Although He thanked the Father that these things had been hidden from the wise and prudent and revealed unto babes, He nowhere implies that the babes could do without the revelation. Nor does He anywhere imply that the truth which He has given them shall be discarded when the deeper insight is granted. He told them plainly the effect which the truth intrusted to them would have on the world. "Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you, Nay; but rather division." The history of the organized Christian Church has been a history of this division, and at the bottom of every strife has been a refusal to accept the simple teachings of the Lord, an attempt to explain away those things which do not accord with man's desires, to be led by self-intelligence.

When the Christian Church was founded by means of the new revelation in the life and teachings of Jesus Christ, there were in the path of its progress many barriers erected by the evils of human nature. The Apostles went forth as sheep among wolves. The institutions of slavery and polygamy, and the cruel forms of entertainment in the arena, had a strong hold on men through their evil affections. By the power of the Lord in His Gospel these evils were in part overcome, and human freedom advanced. Sometimes we are apt to judge the past as if it were the present, and to underestimate the difficulties that have been met, and the progress that has been made. The insistence on obedience to authority, even though it be blind obedience, is sometimes requisite to progress and to the attainment of truth. It was necessary in the youth of the Church during the Middle Ages, as it is and always will be necessary in dealing with rash and immature states of mind, even in the enlightenment of the Twentieth Century. The Roman Catholic Church served and still serves a use among those unprepared for greater freedom. The decline of that Church was brought about not by its insistence upon authority, but by the perversion of that authority to selfish ends,

and by the attempt to keep its people in ignorance. The Reformation played its part in the progress of religious freedom by restoring the Word to the people, and so giving them direct access to the truth. But in its zeal against the Roman Church, it went to the other extreme of setting up the individual conscience as supreme, and establishing the doctrine of faith alone, thereby sowing the seeds of its own destruction. Very soon a decline in faith and charity followed, and the light of the Church went out, as the Lord Himself had prophesied; and it became necessary for Him to come again to dispel the darkness, establish His Church anew, and inaugurate a new era of religious liberty.

Every Church has its beginning in a revelation of truth. It is a fact that the perversion of this truth is brought about by evils in the heart; and in this sense evil desires have been the cause of the decline of every Church. Nevertheless, it is the increase of falsities which establishes and gives power to evil desires; and the consummation of a Church comes when the falsities are so prevalent that the good are helpless before them. At this point truth becomes essential, and the Lord Himself must intervene with a new revelation.

I do not wish in any way to attack the Church of the past or the Church of today, but rather to note some general characteristics involving Christian nations as a whole. The decline of the Church among men is an historical fact. It has been the result of a loss of knowledge concerning God: either the Godhead was divided into a trinity of persons, or Christ was regarded as a man. We sometimes speak of these beliefs as belonging to the past, but they are still held, though in new outer clothing. In the religious literature of today we seldom find a recognition of the sole and supreme Deity of Jesus Christ. In some respects the breach has widened rather than narrowed, and diversity of belief is now more marked than when Athanasius and Arius stood before Constantine the Great. Never perhaps has there been a more universal attack upon the Word, and

never has the attack upon its central doctrine been more deadly.

Why is this? Here we are in the beginning of a new age, when the truth with regard to the Lord and the Word has been revealed in clearer light than ever before. Why do men attack it instead of welcoming it? There is one very simple reason. Men are not willing to recognize as Divine qualities the qualities manifested in Jesus Christ. If we read the literature which treats of the laws of success, we find that self-development, self-expression, self-seeking, and the will-to-power are looked to for its attainment. The forces that bring peace and prosperity are not sought in the qualities manifested in Jesus Christ. Gentleness, humility, self-sacrifice, the love of the welfare of others above the welfare of self, the love of public service for the sake of the public, however loudly they may be extolled with the lips, are not relied upon in actual life. Thus men hug their chains. When men realize that the omnipotent powers are the powers of gentleness, humility, self-sacrifice, and love, the recognition of the Deity of Christ will follow. Men who refuse to accept and use the revelations of truth which the Lord makes to them can make no progress in religious liberty. They remain bound by their own wilful ignorance.

The light of knowledge is essential to all realms of human activity. Thinking is a process; it builds theories out of knowledges. As an architect cannot build a house out of nothing, neither can the mind build a philosophy of life out of nothing. Says Jeremiah: "I know that the way of man is not in himself. It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." It is necessary that there be an authority outside of man, a body of truth to which he may go for guidance; and such a revelation God has always provided. The Commandments were such a revelation; so they were given by the voice of God that His children might know on Divine authority that they are the laws of life. If they are regarded as the laws of men, their authority is taken away: what man makes he has the power to change, but what

God speaks man cannot annul. The Commandments are laws which cannot be broken without destroying man's freedom. The way of the transgressor *is* hard. And when men advance in worldly knowledge to the point where they may keep the letter of the Commandments from mere self-love, under such mottoes as "Honesty pays" and "Serve the public and profits will take care of themselves", it becomes necessary for their attention to be directed toward the deeper meanings of the Commandments, and their application to interior evils. That men might be delivered from bondage to evil and falsity the Lord revealed Himself anew by opening the Word. A new and deeper understanding of the Lord is now possible, and not only possible but essential to progress. A new power flows from the Lord through His Word to those who make use of the new revelation. By it, He has, as it were, taken men into His confidence, and told them plainly of Himself and of His purpose for them, disclosing the laws of His Providence, so that they can freely choose to accept His leadership and protection, and work with Him for the advancement of His Kingdom.

This new light has its effect in all fields of human activity. Men are freed from the dilemma of choosing between superstition and naturalism. The way is opened for the free exercise of rationality. One of the passages of Scripture most commonly quoted today is "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." Men recognize, perhaps more than ever before, the necessity of knowledge; and the "search for truth" is made a shibboleth. But, as often happens with a much-quoted saying, the Lord's words are frequently used without reference to their context, even divorced from the Scriptures themselves and made to oppose them. For example, a recent article attacking religion says specifically "Science is our Savior." It is assumed that the search for truth even on the lowest level will make men free on all levels. A single verse of the context would correct this impression. The Scriptures read: "Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; And ye shall

know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." That is, the statement is addressed to those who believe in the Lord; and the condition of its fulfillment is given: "If ye continue in my word." In order to obtain the truth, and freedom through it, we must not only believe in the Lord, but be in the constant study and practice of His Word. The truth which frees is truth about the Lord. And the passage also implies that it is possible for man to obtain this truth.

The Lord's Church as the New Jerusalem is pictured as descending from God out of heaven. In that city people live in peace and prosperity. In its streets they walk in liberty, for the Lord is the light of it. "Jerusalem is builded as a city that is compact together." The Holy City is a well-ordered and thoroughly consistent body of truth. No one of us completely understands it, nor do all of us together. We meet with variety of opinion. Variety of opinion, we are told, is orderly, and leads to perfection. It is like the breaking up of the sun's light into the colors of the rainbow, or the colors of the various gems in a king's crown. Though the colors differ, they are harmonious. Two people, witnessing the same event, will describe it differently; but the stories should fit together, and give more perfect knowledge and appreciation. Just as in the principle of the stereoscopé, objects in a picture are made to stand out by the separate focusing of the eyes, so various viewpoints, if accurate, give a more rounded and complete picture. Conflict of opinion, however, is like a blur or a blot obscuring the picture; it does not mean that the picture is faulty, but that there is a flaw in the lens. When the views of two persons in regard to a certain point conflict, one is necessarily wrong, and both may be wrong. Truth is consistent.

The fact that none of us is ever wholly consistent, and that we are constantly having to revise our opinions and discard falsities, leads some to the conclusion that we cannot be sure that any of our beliefs are true, and therefore that the attainment of truth is an impossibility. In answer to this, we have the Lord's definite statement, "Ye shall

know the truth." The body of knowledge continually grows, but we do not discard the truth of the past: we build on it, and develop it. This is not the first generation that has acquired truth, and advanced the cause of religious liberty. The attainment of truth is possible, and the attainment of a unity in belief is possible. Two great difficulties stand in the way: the intellectual task and the conquest of self-will; but neither one is insurmountable. The intellectual problems are very great; but the faculty of reason enables man to detect error, and freedom of choice gives him the ability to reject it. The conquest of self-will is equally imperative. When conflict of opinion arouses personal animosity, it is a sign that our pride has been touched, that we have taken criticism as a personal insult; and selfishness is always at the bottom of our taking offense. Yet this also, the Lord tells us, can be overcome. The great point to be held in mind is that, if we would attain truth and become free, we must look to the Lord and be led by Him.

"Except the Lord build the city, he laboreth in vain that buildeth it." In the attainment of liberty, religious liberty is essential and all-inclusive. It is not toleration, the license to believe whatever suits our whims and shifting moods. The basis of its attainment is knowledge of the truth. This implies correct desires, the necessity of a right will, looking to the Lord as the Author of all liberty, not to self. The condition for its development is the willingness to live according to the truth when it is attained. As we look at history, we note an increase of liberty as ultimated in the outward life of men. Slavery is on its way to extinction, and political liberty seems assured. But there are levels on which liberty has not been attained; and new and more oppressive forms of slavery threaten. There is much yet to be accomplished. The attainment of religious liberty in its true meaning, which is freedom from evil desires and false thoughts in which lie hidden the causes of all forms of slavery, is the ever-present task of humanity. Its further development awaits the future. LOUIS A. DOLE.

# WHAT IS SIN?

By the Rev. E. M. L. Gould

"IT is difficult to understand," says a recent writer, "how our modern outlook on life—whatever social stratum we may strike—leaves any room for 'the sense of sin'." This seems to him to be one of the gravest factors in what he calls "The Present Predicament of Christianity." It has been, he says, to the sense of sin, and to the consequent sense of need for deliverance from sin, that Christianity has always made its first and most powerful appeal. In doing so it has only been true to the teaching of its Master, who began His own ministry, as the Gospels tell us, by preaching repentance. So far, then, as the sense of sin is really lacking in it, the modern world would seem to have become inaccessible to the Christian message.

May it not be, however, that what the world has really lost is not so much the sense of sin as the willingness to accept conventional and imperfect definitions of it? For the orthodox theology, the sense of sin really depended on the fear of Divine punishment, to be visited on us as heirs of the guilt of Adam. Such a view is as false to the teachings of Christ as it is revolting to our common sense of justice. In so far as it is gone, the world is exceedingly well rid of it, albeit it was hardly more than a theological abstraction except for the morbidminded.

Aside from theology, the sense of sin has meant for the average Christian the sense of his personal wrong-doing; the acts which he has felt that he should repent of have been his own, not those of his ancestors. (And in this he has really been more orthodox than have the theologians.) But today, whereas every honest man is as sensible as ever to his imperfection, and desires to grow better as sincerely as his fathers did, he is much less sure than they were of the way to go about it. He dismisses a good deal of what they

called repentance with the common sense observation that "It's no use crying over spilt milk"; and as to "doing right," he finds it by no means easy to determine what *is* right and what wrong, or in older terms, what is "righteous" and what "sinful."

This last difficulty is largely due to our present increased knowledge of history and of the habits and standards of the world in general. So long as men mostly lived in small communities, having relatively little intercourse with the outside world, whatever standards of conduct the community as a whole accepted became thereby laws of right and wrong for most of its members. But nowadays we have come to know the wide variation in such standards which exists in different communities. Even among those who in theory accept a common religion and a common sacred code there have been marked differences, and these of course are considerably greater among people of different religions. However sure we may be that Christianity is superior to other religious systems, we cannot claim any longer that it has had a monopoly in producing noble lives, or that men and women of high type have not had ideas of right and wrong that were equally different from ours and from one another's. Hence the feeling becomes increasingly prevalent that in the main right and wrong are matters of opinion or taste, and depend on the particular environment in which we chance to have grown up.

Of late, too, still another factor has come to make the confusion worse confounded. From the standpoint of modern psychology it becomes increasingly difficult to say when and how far a man is responsible for his acts at all. For these are seen as often unconscious reproductions of mental states that are due to physical diseases, to environment, or to other causes entirely outside of the individual. If a man cannot know with any degree of certainty what acts are sinful, and if he is only in part responsible for his acts in any case, what become of sin and the sense of sin, and what need have we of repentance, remission of sins, or redemption from them?

Before we can answer these questions to the satisfaction of the modern world, as well as of an enlightened Christian conscience, we must find an entirely new definition of sin; a reasoned and spiritual rather than a dogmatic and conventional basis for distinguishing right from wrong. And right here there lies, I believe, one of the two or three most important contributions which our Church has to make to the thought and life of the religious world.

Let me begin with a rather startling statement: The one adequate answer to the question, "What acts are sinful?" is, "No *acts* are sinful, *ipso facto,* apart from motive." The whole confusion of thought in regard to sin which exists in the world today is due to the fundamental fallacy of regarding sin as in part at least a matter of conduct. Sin may and most often does express itself in a form of conduct, but that form is not and can never be what constitutes the sin. In other words, sin and its opposite, righteousness are qualities of the spirit, and can never be distinguished except on a spiritual basis. The terms right and wrong are characteristically spiritual terms, and strictly and properly can be applied to actions only as a figure of speech, derivatively. To speak of a "righteous act" is as definitely to use what the rhetoricians call "the transferred epithet" as to speak of a "cordial handclasp." The act appears to express righteousness, and the handclasp cordiality, but neither *in itself* possesses any spiritual or emotional quality whatever. What is more, if we call to mind by how many and how different ways it is possible to express cordiality, we shall find it easier to understand the multiplicity of ways of expressing righteousness or unrighteousness.

I do not mean to imply by this that the realm of conduct is not governed by laws, even by absolute and fixed laws. As a matter of fact it is impossible to think about the universe intelligently unless we agree that law is in universal control of every aspect of it. There are acts and courses of action which intrinsically tend toward individual and general well-being, and there are acts which quite as inevitably tend to destroy it. In other words, there is or should be a science

of moral or social hygiene that is just as definite as the science of physical hygiene.

But moral or social hygiene *is* a science, and its laws are to be discovered by precisely the same means as those of the other sciences; that is, by experiment and deduction. They are not religious or spiritual laws, and it is not the primary function of the Church as such to discover or proclaim them. One way of putting the reason for this is to say, that religion is only indirectly concerned with objective fact as a basis of truth, or of principle.

This was why, when one of the heirs to a piece of property came to the Lord Jesus and asked Him to help secure a just division of it, He answered, Man who made me a judge or a divider over you?" It was not that the property ought not to have been divided; nor was it that there was no absolutely just way of dividing it; simply, these things as external facts did not primarily concern Him. He was interested in the spiritual issue involved: the danger of covetousness to which both parties to the controversy were exposed. And so, dropping the practical issue with no further comment, He went straight on to His parable of the rich fool, with its searching conclusion: "So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God."

It is true, that the science of morals has a peculiar importance and interest for religious people, and this for two reasons. In the first place the religion which does not seek to express itself in terms of appropriate conduct dies of inanition. (Any school teacher will tell you that an idea or emotion not expressed in act is doomed soon to be forgotten.) In the second place, conduct itself exercises an effect on the mind and spirit which may perhaps be compared with the electrical process known as induction; that is to say, any course of action, from whatever motive it is undertaken, tends to induce in the doer the mental state which it normally expresses. One may undertake to kill a fellow being (as in war or in self-defence) in a spirit entirely free from hate, but the act of killing tends of itself very forcibly to induce hate—as every soldier who

has been in action can testify. Or again, an unhappily married couple may come to the honest conclusion that divorce is, for them, the lesser evil, and may seek it with this motive; but even so the act of re-marriage, while a former partner is still living, at least, tends to strengthen in them the instinct of promiscuity.

Herein lies the danger, not so much of "doing evil that good may come"—since that which is done with a purpose that good may come is not wholly evil—but of acting in a disorderly or unmoral manner from a good intent. Such action may indeed be quite unavoidable in a still greatly disordered world, but its dangers must always be reckoned with, and a special effort must be made to gain the Divine protection. It was perhaps with the thought of such situations that the Savior gave the promise: "They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them."

I dare say that the case of the Ten Commandments has been in your minds as implying that religion does seek directly to regulate outward conduct. On the face of it, here are certainly ten rules of behavior given with the most impressive assurance of a Divine sanction. We must look, however, for the deep religious purpose behind the events at Sinai. Generally speaking, these ten rules were not new when they were given to Moses; indeed, most of them have been matters of common knowledge since the first beginnings of society, for men could not live together without more or less observing them. As Swedenborg tells us, such signs of Divine endorsement were given to these familiar principles in order that men might at last come to see their spiritual content, might realize that there was a *religious* reason why they should not steal, kill or commit adultery. It was indeed, as you will remember, just this spiritual content that the Lord Jesus nearly always emphasized:

> Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment: But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his

brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment . . . Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery: But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a women to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.

It was, moreover, with the same spiritualizing intent that He said that all the Law and the Prophets hung on loving God and our neighbor.

When, therefore, the Church seeks to make itself or religion the arbiter of details of conduct—to say with authority that this or the other individual or social practice is right or wrong—it makes a most dangerous departure from the path of certainty. For precisely because morals, as I said before, is a science, it is in a state of continual, if intermittent, evolution and advancement, just as is religion.

The world today very properly regards as unmoral and disorderly many practices which were once thought unexceptionable—duelling and slavery, for instance. It appears to be in the process of deciding similarly against war; and the future may bring changes as startling from our present standpoint as these would have seemed in the days of ancient Israel. No one can say just what institutions which now seem to us necessary and inevitable may one day be banned by all civilized opinion. In tying itself to a fixed and arbitrary standard of conduct, therefore, the Church makes as grave an error as it did in identifying itself and its revelations with the Ptolemaic theory of the universe. In this as in every realm of life the true function of religion is not to hold men to the level of past and present achievements, but to urge them onward.

The identification of sin and of righteousness with specific forms of conduct is equally dangerous to the individual. To begin with, it quite definitely limits his progress by setting a standard which can be attained. If to be righteous merely means to live in a certain manner, then anyone can be perfectly righteous if he desires strongly enough to be so. But we know now that the man who regards himself as perfectly righteous is in perhaps the most dangerous

spiritual state conceivable. On the other hand, when sin is regarded as consisting essentially in "wrong actions," and the whole purpose of religion is thought to be to avoid such sin, the logical consequence is a perfectly negative and useless life, like that of the old ascetics.

Finally, this view of sin and righteousness induces an attitude toward others which is the exact reverse of Christian. In case of a difference, it tends to exalt our moral judgments as intrinsically superior to those of our neighbors, while leaving out of consideration their social and educational opportunities, as well as their limitations of mind or of body. Its logical consequence in this respect is the attitude of the Pharisee: "God, I thank Thee, that I am not as other men are."

But if good and evil, righteousness and sin, or essential right and wrong, are not matters of conduct, what are they, and how may we hope to distinguish them? I have said that they are qualities of the spirit, and so our ground of distinction must inevitably be a spiritual ground. The essential teaching of the Christ is that man was created, spiritually as well as materially, for a social existence; that is to say, he exists not merely for his own sake, but that he may be an actively working part of the spiritual whole, which the Master called the Kingdom of God, and which Swedenborg further describes by the term, Greater Man, or Collective Manhood. All righteousness, therefore, consists in willing co-operation for the common welfare, and all sin in refusal to co-operate. To put it another way, the essence of evil is the desire to attain one's own interest or happiness without regard to the interest or happiness of society. (And of course the fact that these interests really coincide is the basis of the statement that all evil is a form of spiritual insanity.) In a word, sin is simply and entirely selfishness.

To say this alone, however, does not get us anywhere in particular. Most of us will admit that we are by natural disposition more or less selfish, and that we ought to be less so. The question is, By what means, if any, is our

individual and collective selfishness to be got rid of, and unselfishness or righteousness put in its place? I assume it is obvious in any case that so radical a change cannot take place except by a gradual and lengthy process.

Now I am convinced that the answer to this question must be in terms of that very familiar but little understood saying of Emanuel Swedenborg's, that the way to regeneration is "to shun evils as sins against God." In the light of what has been said, however, it will be clear that this does not mean—except perhaps for the children and the childish-minded—*simply* to avoid certain acts because Someone Else, be He never so exalted, has forbidden or dislikes them. It means rather to refuse to cherish or in any way to express a selfish and anti-social spirit, because such a spirit is inhuman; because it is the opposite of the spirit of essential manhood. For while man the created being is not and can never be God, God Himself is alone completely Man. Whatever accordingly is not Godlike (the old word was "godly") is not really manlike or worthy of our potential manhood. And since God, who is Man, is Love, it follows that selfishness—the antithesis of love—is also the opposite of that Manhood which is God, which was manifest in the flesh as Jesus Christ, and whose operation in the lives of those who will open themselves to it, is known in the Gospels as the Holy Spirit.

But note the fact that our author does not ask us to shun Evil (with a capital E), but to shun "all evils." In other words there is no constructive value in rejecting selfishness as an abstract quality—any more than there is, on the other hand, in merely rejecting certain outward acts which seem to express it. Religion consists in deciding practical and concrete issues on a spiritual basis. Life offers to each of us an unbroken series of alternatives, and at every moment we are forced to choose this and discard that. The thing that matters, from a really religious standpoint is not merely what we choose, but the ground on which we choose it. If in any given situation we choose that course which seems to us to be the more useful to God and our neighbors, we

have made a step toward righteousness. If, on the other hand, in selfish absorption we disregard every right and interest but our own, and make our choice on that basis, we have sinned—and there is no other sin whatever.

To this seemingly sweeping statement I will make but one qualification. There are schools of thought and stages of progress in which the concepts of God and the neighbor are not clearly seen as such—in fact they are seen clearly perhaps only in Christianity. Their equivalents elsewhere are what I may call the sense of the good and the sense of the non-self. In other words, the constant phase of the moral alternative is the choice between pure self-interest and a moral principle or religious teaching outside of self. But even here the same law applies, and right and wrong are to be determined on exactly the same basis.

The glory of such a view of sin and of righteousness as I have tried to set forth is that it applies to all men alike, whatever their religious beliefs or their stage of moral or social evolution. The greatest saint and the man whom we call the lowest sinner have each at all points an equal chance for growth or for retrogression. What matters about a man is not so much where he is as in what direction he is moving. And we are all moving, forward or backward as we choose, at every moment of time and eternity.

It is urged by some as against this view that it leaves religion "up in the air," and gives the Church no real, practical function except to try to encourage progress in the abstract. But this is not true by any means. One might as well say that the knowledge of the law of gravitation makes physics unnecessary (instead of making it possible) as to assert that because the basis of distinction between right and wrong can be very simply stated, to make the decision in particular situations does not involve the most arduous thought and study. Every one of life's individual and collective problems involves—as we saw in the case of divorce, for example—detailed spiritual as well as moral and social principles, for which, indeed, we must turn to Divine revelation, but which we cannot even know without search and

prayer. The Church exists to discover and promulgate these spiritual principles as well as to furnish a channel for attempts to express them in outward activity. In other words, it is or should be at once the classroom, the laboratory, and the workshop of the spirit.

None the less the essential purpose and use of the Church are spiritual. Its duty to men and women is less to determine where they stand—and still less to induce them to come where its members happen to be—than it is to induce them to move forward, to realize in their own way their Divinely given manhood and womanhood. For in so far as any or all of us do this, we admit into our lives and the race life the creative force that lies behind and within the universe. We permit God to provide for that atom of spiritual energy which is our own inmost being its appointed and ever more satisfying and effective outlets. There enters our souls that "life more abundant" which the Savior said He had come to the world to give us, and which He will give us in so far as we make His coming, not just a phase of the race experience, but the central reality of our daily lives.

E. M. Lawrence Gould.

# INTERCOURSE WITH THE SPIRITUAL WORLD

By the Rev. Richard H. Teed

(Minister of the Melbourne, Australia, New-Church Society)

I SHALL regard it as no part of my purpose to dwell at length upon proofs of the existence of the spiritual world, of its substantiality, of its beauty and wonder. We are already convinced of that. Our immediate subject is only the one of intercourse with that world by beings still inhabiting this one. There is plenty of recorded evidence that such is possible. In the Sacred Scriptures we read of instances almost beyond number of angelic beings appearing to men on earth and discoursing with them. Then there is the famous instance of Saul and the Witch of Endor. In modern times we have the evidence of such great and renowned men as Sir Oliver Lodge and Sir A. Conan Doyle, besides many others not as renowned. The outcome of this evidence is that the existence of the future world can no longer be denied; and also that intercourse with it is not an impossibility.

But now differentiation must be carefully made in all this evidence. There is a great and impossible distinction which must be realized between the one class of evidence and the other. It is so vital to bear this distinction in mind, because the type of evidence produced by the one means and that produced by the other are absolutely different. Indeed I would urge this vital distinction between the two classes of evidence as the first fundamental point to be fully grasped in the study of our subject. The point of contrast is this: that whereas in some cases the intercourse came to man wholly unsought, in the other cases the intercourse comes about wholly through man's seeking. Thus in the one case the initiative is from above; in the other it is from below. Contrast, too, the typical methods of approach, the conditions under which on man's side the intercourse has

been secured. When the initiative was upon the spiritual side, intercourse invariably took place upon perfectly natural and ordinary conditions, while men were going about their ordinary work and in God's sunshine. One might instance all the cases of angelic appearing recorded in the Scriptures: Gideon at his threshing floor; Abraham in his tent door at the close of the day; Zacharias at his duties in the Temple; Mary the Virgin preparing herself for the sacred duties of being a wife. The one striking contrast to this recorded in the Scriptures is when the initiative was upon the human side, and the man Saul went to seek communication with those in the other world. The Word expressly states that much to Saul's disappointment the Lord had refused him any revelation or vision; so the desperate and miserable man must needs go and seek out some communication through means which had ever been forbidden in Israel, association with a witch. There is something unearthly and weird about every séance. There is the darkness, the creepy silence, the medium (usually an extraordinary person) falling into a trance, the ghostly rappings and signs. Contrast, pray, the appearing of angels to bring their messages to humans. In many cases they were, as we read in the Scriptures, mistaken for men; and Mary, when she saw her risen Lord in the garden, supposed Him to be the gardener. I wish particularly to emphasize this, because, as I have already said, I regard this as the crux of the whole subject.

As we shall see in a moment, this contrast applies just as much when we come to regard the actual communications received. I urge considering only the manifest contrast in the ways of approach previous to intercourse. Is it not manifest that the one form of intercourse stands discredited beside the other? Is it not clear that the one thing is orderly, and the other is not? That which requires means so artificial to attain its object as the use of the person of a witch, always forbidden by Holy Writ,—the use of some poor creature as medium always abnormal in development

and sometimes destined for ultimate confinement in a mad house,—such, I say, cannot be God's appointed ways whereby man should receive information from the world beyond.

Still of course I do not deny that intercourse is obtained. To do so would be mere folly. Highly trained and scientific minds, such as Sir Oliver Lodge's and Conan Doyle's, are not easily gulled or deceived. They have conscientiously striven to sift this subject to its bottom. Both approached it skeptically, and both have come to the conviction that intercourse is perfectly possible.

We wish now to urge as our second point, that the demonstration of the fact of the possibility of intercourse being held, instead of being the end of the matter, is the veriest beginning. Because intercourse can be obtained, it is not at all necessarily a right thing to do; and what is obtained thereby is by no means to be therefore relied upon as fact. So let us proceed now to investigate further the contrast between the two types of intercourse. What are the results that come from the intercourse? What information is obtained? Broadly speaking, one can most emphatically say that what is revealed through the intercourse unsought is something useful and necessary, whereas what is procured through the séance has added not one whit to the knowledge which is valuable and helpful to man. This may perhaps be thought a sweeping judgment. But I believe the facts fully bear out what is asserted. Revelations given to man by means of angels are invariably of use to man; if not manifestly to the one to whom the revelation comes, then to some later generation, or to the people among whom he lived. Such is the purport and outcome of the angelic intercourse with men recorded in the Bible. Such also is the nature of the intercourse vouchsafed to the Lord's Servant, Emanuel Swedenborg. Untold value for men of all generations lies within his writings; yet all came to him utterly unsought by himself.

Contrast then the types of revelation secured through the sought intercourse by means of a medium. It is in nearly

everything most trivial and paltry,—surprisingly so. The utterances of the supposed Raymond in the spirit world, as recorded in Sir Oliver Lodge's book, are not worthy of the man who uttered so much that was truly noble and wise while here on earth. Why should the man deteriorate by the passage into the other life? Surely the reverse would be expected! Yet such must undoubtedly be said of the spirit Raymond, judging by the utterances attributed to him. Invariably do we find spirit utterances to be concerned with the merely sensual, the outermost things of our life and theirs. Upon such things is their interest centered, and about such do they speak, and concerning these things in their world do they give descriptions. Seldom do they ever speak concerning the eternal verities of religion,—the Lord and the Word; but rather these subjects are avoided, and even if touched upon they are made light of, and their Divinity brought into question. It would be a safe challenge to throw out to any spiritist, to show anything of genuine value which has been revealed to men by means of spiritism. What is but paltry in these revelations man would be quite as well without, as it in no way tends to ennoble his life here, or to elevate his conceptions of the life that awaits him hereafter. What is not paltry, if true, will be found already revealed by the Lord in His way for the use of mankind; and His way is by the revelation imparted to man unsought by him.

There is nothing which has been revealed through spiritism which is useful to know which could not have been already found revealed in the pages of the Divine Word or in the Writings which comprise the Revelations of the New Church. Seek and you will find this so. What can the spiritists tell us that is new? Nothing which we through the Revelation of the New Church do not know already, and know it in a form and expression far more sane and rational. The spiritist tells us of a real world with a solid earth, with mountains and rivers, trees and flowers, cities and gardens; he tells us that a spirit is veritably a man just

as he was here; but there is nothing new in all this to the New-Churchman. He needs or should need no sensual confirmation to his faith. Having once seen with his rationality that what has been revealed to him concerning the after world is true, he needs not to see, touch and handle, or surely he would merit the rebuke of our Lord given to Thomas: "Thomas, because thou hast seen Me, thou hast believed. Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed."

This rebuke of our Lord's is the one most applicable to all who *seek* intercourse with the spiritual world. For it might naturally be asked, Wherein lies the harm of such intercourse, if a person wishes to indulge in it? Here then lies the first word of the answer. It is a prying into hidden things *from oneself*. It is thus from the first an attitude distrustful of the Divine Providence. "Oh!" it may be said, "you are using the old argument of the ignorant in their opposition to every effort made by man in the path of learning and scientific investigation." There is this great difference, however, between the one position and the other. In all matters of scientific research, nothing has been given in advance; it is an entirely unexplored land, and there is quite manifestly a call to the enterprising to unfold all that human ingenuity may fathom. Now in investigation of spiritual things all is *not* dark and unknown; for God has spoken out of that darkness, has sent unto us his servants, angels and prophets to declare what we need to know. We have His Word; and now in this New Age we have the Writings of the New Church. Is it not distrustful of the wisdom of the Divine Revcealer of the hidden secrets, if we wish to know more than He has revealed? or if, worse still, we set aside what He has revealed and begin a new search by ourselves? God has quite manifestly declared Himself in His Word; for without His Word we could not possibly know anything of God or His Kingdom at all. Is it not then likely to be a more fruitful course of study to strive to understand what He has revealed, than to set that

aside and try to learn *de novo* by oneself? We submit that the search from self is doomed to failure from the start; it can never yield a genuine and permanent satisfaction. And the facts bear out this assertion. Much spiritistic research causes complete collapse and mental breakdown to its devotees. Sir Oliver Lodge himself warns his readers against too frequent intercourse.

Wherein then lies the danger? First let us make what seems the most astonishing statement: that most likely the spirit with whom the person communicates is not the spirit he pretends to be! Undoubtedly in at least nine cases out of ten it is a mere impersonation. Why are folks so foolishly credulous of all they may have declared to them by beings on the other side? Are we, who are so careful not to be taken in by our fellows upon earth, to believe as gospel what someone upon the other side has declared to us? I can picture many a spirit laughing up his sleeve, as it were, when he sees how delightfully he has gulled some foolish dupe upon earth. "Oh," it is said, "it cannot be impersonation by a spirit, as the being upon the other side can speak of matters known only to the one he claims to be." This plea can be put forth only by those who are ignorant of what they might be acquainted with, if they would but read what has been revealed. We learn that in the other life there is nothing covered, but all is revealed and made known; what was whispered in the ear in closets, shall be proclaimed upon the housetops. We are informed in the doctrines of the New Church that in the other life the minds of all are so manifest that they can be clearly read. There can be no pretense long maintained there. The memory of angel and spirit and man can be read like a book. If, then, a man puts himself into a condition in which he may have open intercourse with spirits in the other life, he necessarily puts himself at a disadvantage: that whereas he himself can see and hear only vague and uncertain signs and sounds, the spirit with whom he holds intercourse can know him through and through. So from that vantage point can the

spirit, reading the memory of his interviewer, impersonate whomsoever he will, and whomsoever the man on earth asks to see. The spirit can know just what type of person is sought, and just what kind of answers are expected; and consequently he acts accordingly.

Now it may be asked, Why should it be assumed that the spirit who communicates is a fraud and always mischievous? Because what he does is contrary to Divine order; and no good spirit or angel will do this. How do we know it is contrary? Because as we have already seen, it is a setting aside of the already given Divine Revelation, and a seeking for information from oneself. But surely there can be no harm, such is the plea, in two partners dearly beloved to each other holding sweet converse after one of the two has passed through the gate of death. Certainly not, we reply, if the intercourse comes first from the other side where the one in light knows that he acts thus under the Divine permission for some particular purpose. He will refrain from seeking such intercourse, if from his higher light he can see that such would not be wise. If he communicates, he will need no entranced medium and ghostly rappings, no darkened room and unhealthy expectancy. If, however, the intercourse is sought on this side, all these unhealthy means have to be adopted, and even then there is no guarantee that the desired loved one will be reached. If he be good, he will not use such unseemly methods. It is spirits who are of the earth earthly, who are ever ready to enter into communication with man. They are the lowest of spirits, who have no respect either for the Lord or for His Word, and wish to be a law unto themselves. These are ever waiting to answer when man appeals to them. They then delightedly pounce upon their prey under the pretense of friendship, and thenceforth strive by every effort in their power to gain ever increasing influence over the man. This they are well able to do from their vantage ground in the spiritual realm, each time the man subjects himself to them by striving to communicate; until at last,

if he persist, he comes into a state as near the "possession" recorded in the Gospels as it is possible for him to be. Witness what has been already pointed out in contrasting the Raymond Lodge of this world and the supposed Raymond Lodge speaking from the other world. The spirit is most markedly the inferior to the man. If the spirit were truly Raymond he would undoubtedly have been even finer than the noble youth known while still hampered within the heavy garments of flesh. I do not believe that the supposed Samuel raised by the witch of Endor was truly he whom he impersonated. Is it to be believed that the great and good Samuel would have come obedient to the summons of a witch-medium, when the Lord had expressly closed every avenue of orderly communication from the other world to Saul?

Spiritism will never bring peace to anyone. It never has done so; and it has undoubtedly brought much misery to many. It brings restlessness and uneasiness, and weans the seeker away from the only genuine Source of Comfort, the Lord Himself and His Word. It is harmful to man to an even greater extent than already indicated because man thereby brings himself into closer contact with the worst spirits with whom he is at that time associated in the course of his journeying through life, and so increases the power of evil over himself and decreases the power of good. In the doctrines of the New Church we are taught that there are angels and spirits associated with man all through life. These spirit associates change according to the varying states into which a man passes with some degree of permanency. He has good spirits with him, ever those best suited to help him in his then present state; and he has also evil spirits with him which are most in accord with the evils to which he inclines. The latter spirits are permitted to be with him in order to preserve his equilibrium, and so keep him in freedom. Neither good nor bad spirits, however, know that they are with the man. Their influence is therefore unconscious upon him, but still quite potent consistent with

the maintenance of his freedom. If they were conscious of their influence upon the man, and could see its operation upon him, they would inevitably enter into a kind of possession of him, subjecting his mind to theirs. This is not permitted. It would be disorderly even for good spirits or angels, as such would interfere with the man's freedom, and thus with his development. Thus we can see the harm that man brings upon himself if he opens the door of intercourse with the spiritual realm. The good spirits will not communicate with him; indeed, they know not that he is seeking such communication, because they are not looking earthwards. Man's evil spirit associates, however, are on the lookout for every opportunity to communicate with him; and they gladly do so, if man will but give them the opportunity. Thus man has increased the power of his worst foes. For it will be the spirit *nearest* to him who will be the first to answer his request for intercourse. He thus gives them an increased hold at once over all his worst propensities, and over all in him that accords with their own depraved nature. This they will continually strive to excite and keep alive; and they will gradually kill all that is higher in him. Yet they will work so artfully and with such discretion that the man may not become alive to his danger until it is too late, and he has yielded himself up as their abject slave. Never does spiritism increase man's faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, nor in the power of His Word; and therefore it never gives peace or rest for his soul.

So our conclusion is that whereas intercourse may undoubtedly be obtained by man's seeking, yet such intercourse is worse than useless, as it brings man only into association with the lowest kind of spirits; and what is worse, it is inevitable that through the means that man must employ to get this intercourse, he *subjects* himself to those beings with whom he communicates. Further, these beings are necessarily those most akin to all that is lowest in him, and are thus the first to answer his summons. They at once take hold of their advantage over him, and subtly lead him

on by tempting bits of apparent revelation; and all the while they grip hold of and encourage in him all that they love, and gradually throttle all else. The only intercourse that is good and reliable is that which originates from the spiritual realm. The Lord will not permit us to be molested thus by evil spirits *against our will,* and He will only occasionally grant this intercourse to good spirits for some wise and gracious purpose. Therefore, if invited to seek spirit intercourse, we should unhesitatingly refuse; but if such comes to us unsought, then gladly and without fear we may listen to all that may be told.

RICHARD H. TEED.

# THE MIRACULOUS IN NATURE

By George C. Warren

AT an interesting and somewhat spirited discussion of "Miracles," the speaker had naturally referred to a paper by one of our ministers on the subject of the greatest of all miracles, the birth of Christ without the agency of a human father; greatest because of the Divinity involved, but to my mind, scarcely more "impossible" or less understandable, if traced back to the beginning, than the causes back of the usual so-called "natural" births, or the thousands of operations of nature which we witness daily, and therefore without question accept as facts.

During the discussion one of our ministers brought out the beautiful thought, true to the dictionary, that "miraculous" means "wonderful." The difference between miracles and the usual common operations of nature is that one is unusual and the other a matter of every-day experience, so common as to be generally accepted without much thought. The illustration was made that the growth of the blade of grass would be regarded as miraculous, if not common. Another minister answered in effect:

> That is all very beautiful, but it is not satisfying. Thinking people, and especially scientists, must have more than that. They must *know* before they will accept; and we must appeal to their reason, we must offer proof. The scientist knows how the grass grows,—how the roots shoot out under the ground, and take water and something from the earth which is converted into the blade.

True; but what back of that? What causes the root to grow or the seed to form and make generation possible; and what does the root do to the earth and the water to convert it into sap and finally into the beautiful blade of grass? Why does the grass root produce a simple blade of grass, and why does the dandelion root—growing beside the grass, fed by the same earth and the same water—

produce the comparatively coarse ragged leaf, filled with its bitter milk-like sap, and finally produce the beautiful yellow dandelion flower? Why does the daisy root, also adjoining the grass and fed by the same earth and water, produce the strong plant and delicate daisy with its yellow centre and its wax-like white petals? Leaving the roots of different species of plants growing side by side, let us turn to the tulip. Why or how does one bulb produce a flower of one solid color or a beautifully variegated flower, and another bulb, precisely the same as far as any scientist can tell, planted beside the first, produce flowers entirely different in color, with variety almost without limit; and yet the bulbs, the plants, the buds, the earth, the water, are all precisely the same so far as any human or scientific ingenuity or perception can discern? The gardener knows that a given bulb will to a certainty reproduce a flower of the same color or combination of colors as its first flower; and by carefully separating the different bulbs and labeling them he can lay out tulip beds, which when the flowers bloom, will present a certain predetermined artistic design and wonderful blending of color. But how? Why?

To my mind one of the most wonderful (miraculous) things in horticulture is the simple grafting of fruit. We know and we accept as an ordinary incident the fact, or result, that, given a certain apple-tree—for instance, let it be a tree which bears large green sour early apples—if we saw a limb from that tree and carefully insert in the end of the limb a scion (the smallest twig) from a tree bearing late small russet apples, the fruit of that branch outward from the point of union will always be true to the twig and produce the fruit of its progenitor (the russet apple, maturing in the latest fall), while the balance of the tree will continue, true to its nature, and bear its early and very different fruit. The roots, the earth, and the water that produce the sap which feeds the entire tree are identical. The wood, the bark, the branches, the twigs, the leaves, as far as science can discover, are the same. What scientist can tell the how or why of the molecular change which the

sap undergoes as it passes the point of juncture or graft which so entirely changes the character of the resulting fruit with no perceptible change except in the fruit? What scientist can even tell by scientific examination of the wood or the sap on either side of the graft that *there even is any difference,* to say nothing of trying to discover or explain what the difference is?

A simple interesting combination instance in bird and tree life well illustrates the miraculous Divine order of things. The pine tree produces its seeds protected from squirrels and birds under the strong prickly woody fibre of the cone. No! One bird, the crossbill, about the size of our common sparrow, coming from farther north, and wintering in snow-clad northern New England and Southern Canada, must have its means of livelihood. It and it only is provided (by "Nature"? No! by "Divine Providence") with the means of entering the pine cone and withdrawing the seed. The crossbill, as the name implies, differs essentially from all the hundreds of other species of birds of its size in having a strong bill shaped somewhat like the beak of a hawk. The upper mandible of the bill "crosses" over the lower mandible, and both mandibles are sharp-pointed. This provides a wonderful leverage in the bill by means of which the bird is enabled to raise a cone section, and by reason of its peculiar curvature can slip one of the sharp-pointed mandibles under the cone section and draw out the meat or nut. No other bird or animal can penetrate the cone. Think of this wonderful (miraculous) provision; the bird provided with a sure means of livelihood, where everything is covered with snow; and the pine tree protected by its cone from the onslaught, on its generative and reproductive power, of every other bird and animal. Is there anything more than blind "Nature" back of this? Is this wonderful (miraculous) operation of nature any more understandable or less miraculous than the manna fed to the Israelites? Can either be attributed to anything but the planning of a Divine Providence? "Your Heavenly Father feedeth them."

We, including the scientists, must accept the fact. It is of everyday occurrence; not miraculous, scarcely even wonderful, in the common understanding of the words. And yet when in Higher Life, the life of the Divine Humanity, an extraordinary fact is recorded, we are sceptical. We must have proof. The scientist will not believe what he cannot see, know, or have proved to him by scientific ocular demonstration. Let him look anywhere in the plant, mineral, or animal kingdom and press his investigation as far as science will permit, and he comes to the old, old, child's question, "How? Why?" He gets to a point where he can go no farther; but the operations are so common he must accept, *not because he understands, but because he cannot reject. He has the proof of results, not the proof of scientific natural reasoning.* How can he expect to go as far on the Divine plane as he is permitted to do on the natural, the scientific plane?

My thought turns back to the time when I was a boy. In a parlor discussion on the subject of the almost irreconcilable difference between science and religion, the late Rev. John Worcester made a statement, which stamped itself on my youthful mind, to the effect: "We cannot prove spiritual truth by natural reasoning." There is the root of the whole question; and so long as we sit back, and say "I will not believe what I cannot see," we shall never be satisfied as to spiritual occurrences which happened in the past, and will, in the Divine order of things, never happen again. We must approach the spiritual from a receptive state of mind, willing to accept and believe whatever appeals to reason as having even a motive, a Divine motive, for the good, and be careful not to reject as impossible that which does not appeal to our limited reason.

Instances of the wonderful, the miraculous, the Divine, in nature could be cited without end. Permit the mention of one more.

In the nest of a bird are two eggs, precisely the same in size, shape, and coloring, one destined to produce a male,

and the other a female bird. The scientist may examine them chemically, microscopically, in any or every other way, inside and outside. He can discover no difference. In due course, the young hatch from the eggs. Both young birds are and grow up precisely the same in size, shape, and habits. The plumage of both is the same to a feather, a greenish olive with darker wings and tail. As the two birds mature they lose their feathers. The one (the male) grows feathers of a bright scarlet, except its wings and tail, which are jet black,—the "Scarlet Tanager" with its beautiful song. The female bird develops a new coat of the same dull olive feathers, has no song, just a plaintive cry, and is destined for its more domestic life. The two birds are precisely the same in size and habit, only differ in color and song. Every male bird of this species is precisely to a feather like every other of its sex, and so with the female. And so with the thousands of other species of birds for hundreds if not thousands of years. How? Why? Swedenborg tells us what science cannot tell. It is of Divine Providence which rules all things with a definite purpose and under definite laws far more certain and true than any of what we call natural laws, beyond which the scientist is too often not willing to go or accept, although he must acknowledge that there is in nature something beyond his finite mind, reasoning and understanding which he cannot explain. Although the scientist is doing much toward explaining many things in nature, in every line of investigation he comes, and always will come, to a point (the Divine nature of things) beyond which he cannot go scientifically. He reaches the How? the Why? but can go no farther. "Consider the lilies how they grow."

It seems far easier to believe that back of "nature" and its thousands of wonderful (miraculous) results there is a "Master Mind" (a "Divine Providence") which plans and controls its operations—including the troublesome historical miracles of the Bible and scarcely less wonderful miracles of daily occurrence—with a definite purpose (the uplifting

of humanity), than to flounder in the darkness of despair, rejecting the historical which cannot be *proved* by human demonstration, and believing that there is nothing back of the operations of "nature," just a sort of chaotic "happen so" with no fixed purpose. Rob the Bible of its miracles, and the foundations are destroyed. There is nothing left. But there is no more reason to reject the miracles of the Bible on the spiritual plane than to reject the equally wonderful, although common, miracles on the natural plane.

The millions of varieties of animal and vegetable life are composed chiefly of combinations of four elements, three gases (oxygen, hydrogen and nitrogen) and one solid (carbon). Calcium salts or lime enter into the bones of animals and all plants, and animals contain some salts; but in the main, the four elements above mentioned compose most of all animal and vegetable substances.

The chemist knows that water, the most common and useful of all chemical combinations in nature, in its smallest subdivision, the molecule, is composed of two atoms of hydrogen and one of oxygen. Under certain conditions he can produce water from these two gases. Under other conditions he can generate the two gases from water. He knows that from these same two gases in the proportion of two atoms of each he can produce a quite different liquid (hydrogen peroxide), which is useful in medicine, especially as an antiseptic for external application; because on exposure the extra atom of pure oxygen readily leaves the combination, and has special affinity for the diseased tissue in the animal body, which it can thus purify. The chemist knows all this. It is one of the simplest combinations of chemical science. But he does not know why or how the two gases will produce the liquid water, or why, in different proportions, the same gases will produce a quite different liquid, hydrogen peroxide. This is one of the common yet wonderful (miraculous) operations of Divine Providence into which the finite mind of the scientist cannot penetrate.

Again, the chemist knows that the diamond and charcoal,

or lamp black, are the same chemically pure carbon; but he does not know why or how this element under different conditions should take such widely different forms—another wonderful (miraculous) operation of Divine Providence into which the finite mind cannot penetrate. This same solid (carbon) and the gas hydrogen in different proportions from the most complex class of combination known to chemical science,—hydrocarbons,—taking a multitude of different forms, and constituting the basis of all plant and animal life. Petroleum, wood, coal, and thousands of other things are hydrocarbons produced by nature (i.e. by the laws of Divine Providence) under varying conditions. Coal tar (a by-product of the manufacture of gas from coal) is a very complex hydrocarbon. From the black coal tar are produced a series of water-white refined oils, all of which are hydrocarbons, being combinations in varying proportions of the gas hydrogen and the solid carbon. The chemist has discovered that, by combining nitrogen with one of these hydrocarbon oils (benzole, a product of coal tar), he produces nitrobenzole; and that from the nitrobenzole, varying the proportions and conditions of the elements contained, he can obtain the great diversity of colors, analine dyes, which form the basis of most of our artificial coloring matter. But how can these simple elements (hydrogen, carbon, and nitrogen) produce such a diversity of result in color? This the scientist does not know. Again it is beyond the realm of his finite mind, and is a part of the wonderful (miraculous) operation of Divine Providence. Probably the same Divine and therefore impenetrable laws which enable the scientist to produce the great variety of colors from hydrocarbons are the basis of the many colors and shades and combinations of colors produced by nature in plant, insect, bird, and animal life. Remember the basic elements of all are hydrogen, carbon, oxygen, and nitrogen. The scientist says this is "Nature." Darwin goes further, and from close study, keen observation, and the exercise of a magnificent intellect says they are the result of "evolution" by "natural

selection." Doubtless the scientists are in the main correct. Still they only describe the result, the effect or the process, and cannot penetrate into the causes, still less to the Cause of these wonderful (miraculous) phenomena. If they would go but the one step further, they would give the credit of the causes and the laws which produce the results to "Divine Providence," which rules all.

Having gone this far in recognizing "Divine Providence" in the laws and results of "Nature," it is easy to accept the miracles of the Bible (including the greatest of all miracles, the Virgin Birth) which cause all the trouble to the sceptic, the agnostic, the atheist, and the higher critic. Without the acceptance of Divine Providence as ruling all things, including the wonderful (miraculous) works of Nature, the scientist must flounder in the depths of despair, when he tries to go back of results and to penetrate into the causes of things. From natural reasoning and observation we can trace results and immediate causes. Back of these we cannot go with our finite reason. We must accept the Divine Providence. Surely the multitudinous works of nature have not gone on for thousands of years without a regulation beyond our finite reasoning powers to fully compass.

It is no harder to penetrate into the causes of the miracle of the Virgin Birth than into the growth of the blade of grass. The difference is that we know the grass grows before our very eyes every day, and we cannot reject the fact, while the Virgin Birth is an historical event about which we can be sceptical if so inclined. The one is no more impossible, although extraordinary, than the other which is ordinary. Both are wonderful (miraculous).

The electrician knows that through the invention of machinery for generating the "current" on a large scale and controlling it, immense power, heat, and light are produced. But what is electricity, and what are the forces back of its production which make it possible? Another miracle which the finite mind cannot penetrate. But the electrician does

not refuse to *use* the electricity because he does not know the how or the why of its production. So with the Virgin Birth, we do not, cannot, know how the result occurred; but we should accept and *use* the example of the Life produced, and endeavor in our daily pursuits to "follow in His footsteps," and make the most of the benefits to each of us and to mankind in general which that unique, Divinely Human Life offers. We must be careful not to reject, as either improbable or impossible, the historical miracles of the Bible because we cannot see the results with our eyes and therefore have an opportunity to doubt, any more than we reject the miracles of "Nature" which we cannot reject, being of everyday occurrence. Both come from the same cause,—Divine Life,—into which we cannot penetrate, being on the Divine plane, and above our natural, finite comprehension and reasoning power. "Be not faithless, but believing." "Blessed are they that have not seen and yet have believed."

Luther Burbank, who has been the natural means—one of the "ultimates"—through which Divine Providence operates, has been the means of production of more new kinds of plants than any other scientist. He has learned, for instance, that combining one sex principle of the raspberry with the opposite sex principle of the blackberry, a quite different delicious fruit—the loganberry—is produced. Others of Burbank's thousands of achievements in practical application of the science of horticulture, which have been accomplished by almost superhuman patience and study, indicate how Providence operates in evolution of higher and better from lower and more gross species—all as we believe, correspondential to changes and improvements in the spiritual realm. By close reasoning and constant effort, Burbank has been the means, the "ultimate" selected by Providence, to accomplish these extremely useful ends. It, however, is beyond me to appreciate how, as a result of all his study and work, Burbank could toward the end of his wonderful career, class himself as an agnostic, and fail to

recognize a definite Divine Providence back of his work and results, as well as those of other scientists.

Swedenborg says:

> All power is together in ultimates; and that thence the *Lord has infinite power from primes through ultimates.* (Apocalypse Explained, n. 726.)

The plant is the "prime," and Burbank, with his God-given intellect, is the "ultimate" through which the Lord operates in production of new species on the natural plane.

And so through the whole gamut of modern evolution; the things created by Divine Providence are the primes, and the scientists, through whom the Divine operates, are the ultimates. A proper recognition of these facts would, I believe, remove most of atheism, skepticism, and agnosticism, clear up the differences between Fundamentalists and Modernists, and lead to a true understanding of the evolution of this age in which we live—the age in which, on the plane of science, the "Behold I make all things new" predominates to a degree greater than in any period since the early Christian era.

George C. Warren.

# MATERIALS FOR AN ESTIMATE OF SWEDENBORG'S HISTORICAL POSITION AND INFLUENCE

By the Rev. Lewis F. Hite

PERHAPS there is no more curious, no more instructive, chapter in the history of opinion than that which concerns Swedenborg.

When we consider the suddenness of his appearance and the marvelousness of his career, it is not surprising to find that the whole gamut of praise and blame, eulogy and defamation, is run in the opinions expressed about his character and work.

Although a considerable number of biographies and biographical sketches of him have been written, and several collections of opinions made, there exists as yet no adequate collection which could serve as a basis for determining Swedenborg's historical position; and consequently the biographies and biographical sketches have been lacking in criticism and breadth. The most important, if not the only, study of Swedenborg from the historical point of view, is *"Emanuel de Swedenborg, sa Vie, ses Écrits, et sa Doctrine"* by Jacques Matter, the distinguished French historian and philosopher. Both as an historical and as a critical study of Swedenborg's life and writings this is a serious piece of work, and one of permanent value.

The task of making a complete collection of opinions about Swedenborg involves an enormous amount of labor; and in spite of some noteworthy attempts in this direction, the results to date are far from satisfactory. It has been too much the habit to quote opinions without giving exact references to the original contexts from which the quotations were taken. This, of course, leaves any quotation without final authority, and renders it liable to suspicion of misuse. Most biographies of Swedenborg have a chapter

devoted to showing how he has impressed the world at large as evidenced by opinions of certain well known men about him. But in addition to meager compilations of this sort, we have several more extensive ones made for the special purpose of showing the drift of opinion in certain influential quarters. The work of collecting estimates of Swedenborg began with the early attempts to bring together and preserve and publish important original documents of Swedenborg's history. The first of these attempts was made by Dr. Heinrich Wilhelm Clemm of Tübingen University in 1776. After similar later attempts in various quarters, Dr. J. F. I. Tafel, also of the University of Tübingen, in 1838-1845 collected all the documents that had been published before in the Latin, French, English, and German languages, and added quite a considerable new collection. Finally Dr. Rudolph Leonard Tafel, in his monumental work, "Documents concerning Swedenborg" (three volumes, 1875-7), made a very complete collection up to that time. From this work a large body of various opinions may be culled; but as yet this has not been done. The work of collecting documents, therefore, has been eminently successful; but the same cannot be said of that of collecting opinions.

Among the attempts directed specifically to collecting opinions about Swedenborg for the purpose of testifying to his greatness, Dr. Rudolph Leonard Tafel's "Emanuel Swedenborg as a Philosopher and Man of Science" (published in 1867) is the most systematic and complete. In this collection the opinions are grouped under several heads representing the aspects of Swedenborg's life and character which have been the subject of general comment. The quotations are usually, though not invariably, given with exact references. In accord with the purpose of the book, the opinions are entirely favorable, and no distinction is made between advocates and merely friendly critics.

Some years later (1891) the Rev. Benjamin F. Barrett published a collection under the title of "A Cloud of Independent Witnesses." The purpose was to show the influ-

ence of Swedenborg's doctrines, indirect as well as direct, upon the general body of Christian thought; and with this in view Mr. Barrett quoted largely from a few selected authors whose religious opinions either coincided with Swedenborg's or were adopted directly and avowedly from him. Mr. Barrett advocated making use of Swedenborg's doctrines without mentioning their source, and therefore he was especially interested in opinions derived indirectly from Swedenborg, or directly from him without acknowledgment. Accordingly the opinions are quoted in a context of comment to emphasize and justify this view. With the same idea, one chapter of the book is made up of extracts from one hundred private letters, without signatures.

More recently, under the title of "The Testimony of Genius," a small but well selected collection of opinions was published by the Nunc Licet Press. Unfortunately, it exemplifies a slovenly form of publication all too frequent in the New Church. It has neither date, nor name of the compiler; and no references are given to the texts from which the quotations were taken.

Since 1894 the American New-Church Evidence Society has been collecting from all sources references to Swedenborg and the New Church; and it has a large body of material especially adapted to the purposes of a systematic compilation. The records of the Evidence Society cover every phase of opinion and comment as found in books, magazines, newspapers, and to some extent private correspondence and conversation.

With the help of the materials provided by the above mentioned agencies, it is hoped that at least a fair sample of the opinions about Swedenborg may eventually be compiled in orderly form, and that a good basis may be furnished for a provisional historical estimate of his character and work. The present essay is introductory to such an undertaking.

A slight acquaintance only with the course of opinion about Swedenborg is sufficient to warrant the confident expectation that the judgment of history will place Sweden-

borg surely and firmly among the greatest of the very great men of the world. According to Dr. Rudolph Leonard Tafel (see his "Emanuel Swedenborg," p. 55) Prof. Ferdinand Christian Baur (1792-1860) of Tübingen University once said to some of his students: "Swedenborg was the greatest mortal that ever lived." The world is not yet ready to accept this opinion, but the tendency towards it is distinctly observable.

It is true that there have been certain lines of fierce attack upon Swedenborg's character, and especially upon certain of his doctrines; and some of his peculiar, not to say extraordinary, claims have been met with grave doubt or with stubborn resistance; nevertheless the consensus of opinion has been growing steadily in favor of Swedenborg's unimpeachable character, and of his unquestionably unique influence upon the thought of the world.

Descartes is commonly credited with being the father of modern philosophy; but more recently we hear on all sides that modern philosophy began with Kant. It is nearer the truth to say that Berkeley and Swedenborg were the moderns, while Descartes and Kant were Aristotelian scholastics. Strictly speaking no one man was the father of modern philosophy, nor did any one man begin modern thought; but it is easy to show that many of the characteristic elements of modern thought are to be found in Swedenborg's writings. In spite of the determined efforts of Descartes and Kant, and more recently those of James and Bergson, the task of breaking away from Aristotle remains about as difficult as ever; and although Swedenborg wrote in scholastic Latin, and was therefore dependent upon Aristotelian terminology, nevertheless the freedom of his thought is the best example of success in throwing off the shackles of scholastic tradition. It is therefore no idle or preposterous claim to affirm that modern philosophy and modern thought, especially modern religious thought, begin with Swedenborg.

Swedenborg's career was unique in many ways. In an age of scientific enthusiasm and of political and religious

ferment, in a social circle of high officials and titled families, he pursued the "even tenor of his way," an indefatigable student, an enormously industrious and prolific writer, a distinguished public official; and to all his other endowments there was added, during the latter part of his life, a marvelous gift of seership, which was destined to eclipse all the other aspects of his fame. In this extraordinary set of circumstances he was ever the quiet, simple gentleman, pursuing his chosen tasks with single-minded devotion, and at the same time fulfilling all the duties and obligations of his social and civic position. And yet within this quiet exterior and perfectly normal conduct there was going on in his interior life an order of experiences so extraordinary that the world has ever since vacillated between incredulity and amazement, or between admiration and denunciation. Such impressions and attitudes are no doubt natural and inevitable, but other circumstances have in a large measure determined some at least of the lines of comment and the expression of opinions. His astounding claims were indeed enough to provoke doubt and denial; but it was religious alarm and sectarian opposition that aroused the prejudice and antagonism so conspicuous in some of the opinions formed about him, and that have obscured his real character and due fame.

One important service that an adequate collection of opinions should perform is, to reveal the sources of such antagonism, prejudice, and misconception as now in some quarters prevail. These attitudes are largely traditional, having been cultivated in the first place by interested parties; but, as a review of such opinions will show, antagonism has waned, prejudice and misconception have given way, and the real man has come more and more into the light. This is due primarily to the fact that the world has advanced to many of Swedenborg's positions, and the old objections to his doctrines are seen to be based upon false ideas of Christian truth.

It is an interesting fact that the opinions group themselves about certain occasions or events which mark dis-

tinct lines and stages of progress. We have first the body of comment and opinion called forth by the publication of his scientific works; next, the interest aroused by reports of his conversations with the departed; then comes the effort of some of the clergy of Sweden to suppress the circulation of his books. These last two occasions furnish the starting point of sectarian denunciation and popular ridicule of his supernatural pretentions. The occasion for a new line of comment, criticism, detraction, and derision was furnished by the circulation of stories impugning Swedenborg's sanity. In the January number of the *Arminian Magazine* for 1781, John Wesley, nine years after Swedenborg's death, published an account furnished, as stated, by Rev. Aaron Mathesius, who claimed to have derived it from one Brockmer at whose house Swedenborg lodged in 1744. This story, so circuitously brought forward, was dressed up in a sensational style by William White in his two volume "Life of Swedenborg," and was taken from White by Dr. Henry Maudsley as the basis for a psychopathic interpretation of Swedenborg's life and work. Dr. Maudsley was followed by Dr. W. W. Ireland, Dr. Gilbert Ballet, and others. From these sources and in this way an extensive propaganda has grown up among students of psychopathy; and the public has been more or less influenced by it. From the three occasions just mentioned opinions adverse to Swedenborg have radiated in all directions and have become, as it were, public property, to be used *ad libitum* by writers of all grades and aims for literary purposes,—by writers from the level of Lord Byron to the daily newspaper paragrapher.

Swedenborg published his religious works, as previously his scientific, in Latin. He distributed them widely among friends, universities, and dignitaries of the church; but naturally their publication in the language of the learned shielded them in a large measure from the knowledge of the public. This obstacle was removed when the works were translated into the languages of the people; German,

French, and especially English. The appearance of such translations furnished another occasion for comment both favorable and adverse; but it is doubtful if the criticism would have been so severe or the denunciation so fierce, if at the same time it had not been that societies began to be organized under the designation of the "Church of the New Jerusalem." This movement aroused sectarian antagonism, and gave rise to a flood of denunciation. It is necessary to take these circumstances into account in weighing the opinions about Swedenborg circulated at any given time.

Besides the occasions so far enumerated, there have been more recently several notable events which have served to bring Swedenborg to public attention in a way to make a favorable impression as well as to remove prejudice and misconception. The first of these events was the World's Parliament of Religions, held in conjunction with the Columbian Exposition of 1893. Here a knowledge of Swedenborg and of the Church of the New Jerusalem was brought prominently before the representatives of all the world religions. The Hon. Charles Carroll Bonney (a leading member of the Church of the New Jerusalem in the city of Chicago), to whose initiative the Parliament was due, and whose zeal and energy contributed greatly to its success, was President of the World's Congress Auxiliary. The Rev. Lewis Pyle Mercer (pastor of the same Church) was an influential member of the General Committee on Religious Congresses. The representatives of the New Church mingled socially and intellectually with the representatives of other religions, and the distinctive doctrines of the New Church were presented by chosen speakers on the common religious forum of the Parliament. In all these ways Swedenborg's fame and influence were made features of a world-wide occasion. The effect in modifying opinions by increase of knowledge and interest was without doubt proportionate to the extraordinary opportunities offered.

But the event of all others which has given most publicity

to Swedenborg's name was the removal in 1908 of his remains from the little Swedish Church in London where he was first buried, to the stately and solemn cathedral of Upsala, there to be reinterred with Swedish kings as his neighbors. The event was made a state occasion in which high government officials, civil, naval, and military, participated. Accounts of the ceremonies were telegraphed to the newspapers far and wide, and generous tributes to Swedenborg's greatness appeared in all quarters of the globe. The ceremonies and circumstances of the removal were spectacular, and lent themselves to almost sensational publicity. The formalities of the disinterment, with consular attendance making it the act of the Swedish government; the naval escort to the "Fylgia," the finest warship of the Swedish navy; the royal, official, civic, ecclesiastic, and academic participation in the reception and the final disposition of the remains,—all this made the event one of national and international importance. It was one of the most impressive instances of belated recognition on record.

But however impressive, however fitting, however well calculated to disabuse the public mind of unsound prepossessions, this occasion was comparatively external in its effects. There was a contemporaneous event of far deeper and more convincing significance. In 1902 the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences, in response to a new awakening of interest in Swedenborg's scientific, and especially his philosophical, works, appointed a special committee to examine his manuscipts with a view to publishing what seemed desirable. This committee of representative scientists of the faculty of the University of Upsala,—Professors Gustav Retzius and Christian Lovén, in Physiology, Professor Nathorst, in Geology and Paleontology, Professor Henschen, in Medicine and Brain Physiology, and Professor Arrhenius, in Physics,—decided after full investigation to publish the whole body of Swedenborg's writings on scientific subjects, both those in print and those in manuscript. Already three splendid volumes had appeared and other were in preparation, when the World War inter-

rupted the undertaking. Professor Retzius writes a preface to the whole series. Professor Nathorst writes the introduction to Vol. I, on Swedenborg as Geologist. Professor Arrhenius writes the introduction to Vol. II, on Swedenborg as Cosmologist. This important undertaking by the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences is giving Swedenborg an unquestionable position among the greatest of modern scientists, and moulding the opinion of the world at large.

In the mean time, and in interesting relation to the preceding, there took place an event of great historic importance not only as a witness to Swedenborg's greatness but also as evidence of his influence upon the world at the present time. In July 1910, the International Swedenborg Congress met in London. The King of Sweden was patron of the Congress. Count Wrangel was Honorary President, and addressed the Congress as delegate from the Swedish House of Nobles. On the list of Vice-Presidents, there were many distinguished men: government officials of high rank, members of the bench and bar, authors, university professors, and others, representing various nationalities and institutions. Especially prominent were the representatives of the University of Upsala and of the institutions of Stockholm, who made some of the most important addresses. This occassion was the best opportunity ever offered to set before the world, at a great public meeting and in accordance with a well considered comprehensive plan, the salient features of Swedenborg's character and achievements.

Another matter of sufficient importance for mention here, though it has not as yet been given much publicity, is the recent completion of an undertaking begun about 1900, to duplicate by phototype process all Swedenborg's theological manuscripts. In the year 1922 sets of the eighteen thick folio volumes resulting were presented publicly by the Swedenborg Society of London to some of the great libraries of Great Britain with fitting ceremonies. A similar presentation in this country is in contemplation.

The events just passed in review,—the World's Parliament of Religions, the publication of Swedenborg's scientific works under the auspices of the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences, the removal of his remains to Upsala and especially the ceremonies of reinterment in the Cathedral, and the International Swedenborg Congress,—had a sweeping and demonstrative effect upon public opinion both by enlightening educated circles and by removing long standing popular misconceptions. Among the striking evidences of this is the fact that a popular publishing house—J. M. Dent & Sons, publishers of the large series of books known as "Everyman's Library"—brought out as a purely business enterprise large editions of three of Swedenborg's most important works: "Heaven and Hell," "Divine Love and Wisdom," and "Divine Providence." This is most significant evidence of the present attitude of the public mind toward Swedenborg and his doctrines.

Beginning with this issue of the REVIEW, and continuing through several numbers, it is proposed to present a considerable mass of opinions concerning Swedenborg: first, those of some of his personal acquaintances in England, Sweden, and Germany. Subsequently other collections may be presented, the order of arrangement to be determined in large measure by the special lines of criticism mentioned some pages back. The introductory notes and the comments will be supplied by the present writer.

LEWIS FIELD HITE.

## OPINIONS CONCERNING SWEDENBORG

The impression which Swedenborg* made upon friends

*Swedenborg (1688-1772) died the year Coleridge was born. Locke, Leibniz, and Newton were his older contemporaries; among his younger contemporaries were Lessing, Herder, Kant, Goethe, Voltaire, Condillac, Diderot, Hume, Adam Smith, Edmund Burke, Benjamin Franklin, William Penn, and Thomas Jefferson. The later years of his life coincided with the political agitations of the Seven Years War, and with the premonitory rumblings of the French and American Revolutions. As a member of the Swedish House of Nobles, he was active in its proceedings, and he

and acquaintances seems to have been uniformly that of a well-bred gentleman. He was dignified and affable, perfectly at home in all circles and ranks of society, and, in the language of today, characteristically democratic. Like all great men, he is singularly impersonal in his writings, but in one instance, at least, he has given us a most admirable glimpse of himself. This was in response to the request of his friend, the Rev. Thos. Hartley. Before giving the testimonials of any of his acquaintances, it seems best to present here part of that letter, as it gives a good idea of his social and official position, and reveals him as a man of affairs, as well as a devout and single-minded Christian.

FROM THE LETTER OF SWEDENBORG TO REV. THOMAS HARTLEY (1769):

"The friendship which you manifest in your letter greatly pleases me; and I thank you sincerely for both, but especially for your friendship. The praises with which you overwhelm me, I receive simply as expressions of your love for the truths contained in my writings; and I refer them to the Lord our Savior as their source, from whom is everything true, because He is the Truth Itself (John, xiv, 6). I have considered chiefly the remarks you make at the close of your letter, where you express yourself as follows: 'If, perchance, after your departure from England, your writings should be the subject of discussion, and occasion should arise for defending you, their author, against some malignant slanderer, who may wish to injure your reputation by a web of falsehoods, as they are in the habit of doing who hate the truth, would it not be well for you, in order to repel such slanders, to leave with me some particulars respecting yourself, your degrees in the University, the public offices you filled, your friends and relations, the honors which I am told have been conferred upon you, and anything else which might be useful in estab-

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took a leading part in reforms of political, social, industrial, and commercial conditions.

lishing your good character, so that ill-conceived prejudices may be removed; for it is our duty to use all lawful means, lest the cause of truth should suffer injury.' . . . [Here follows a very brief and matter-of-fact sketch of his life, after which he continues:]

"With respect to my family connections, I had four sisters. One of them was married to Ericus Benzelius, who subsequently became the Archbishop of Upsala, and through him I became related to the two succeeding archbishops, who both belonged to the family of Benzelius, and were younger brothers of his. My second sister was married to Lars Benzelstierna, who became a provincial governor; but these two are dead. Two bishops, however, who are related to me, are still living; one of them, whose name is Filenius, and who is Bishop of East-Gothland, officiates now as President of the House of the Clergy in the Diet at Stockholm, in the place of the Archbishop, who is an invalid. He married my sister's daughter. The other, named Benzelstierna, is Bishop of Westmanland and Dalecarlia. He is the son of my second sister—not to mention others of my relations who occupy stations of honor. Moreover, all the bishops of my native country, ten in number, the sixteen senators, and the rest of those highest in office, entertain feelings of affection for me. From their affection they honor me, and I live with them on terms of familiarity, as a friend among friends; the reason of which is, they know I am in company with angels. Even the King and the Queen, and the three princes, their sons, show me great favor. I was also invited once by the King and Queen to dine with them at their own table, an honor which is generally accorded only to those who are highest in office. Subsequently the Crown Prince granted me the same favor. They all desire me to return home. Wherefore, I am far from apprehending in my own country that persecution which you fear, and against which in your letter you desire in so friendly a manner to provide; and if they choose to persecute me elsewhere, it can do me no harm.

"But all that I have thus far related, I consider of comparatively little importance, for it is far exceeded by the circumstance that I have been called to a holy office by the Lord Himself, who most mercifully appeared before me, His servant, in the year 1743, when He opened my sight into the spiritual world, and enabled me to converse with spirits and angels, in which state I have continued up to the present day. From that time I began to print and to publish the various arcana that were seen by me or revealed to me concerning Heaven and Hell, the state of man after death, the true worship of God, the spiritual sense of the Word, besides many other important matters conducive to salvation and wisdom. The only reason of my journeys abroad has been the desire of making myself useful, and of making known the arcana that were intrusted to me. Moreover, I have as much of this world's wealth as I need, and I neither seek nor wish for more.

"Your letter has induced me to write all these particulars in order that, as you say, 'ill-conceived prejudices may be removed.' Farewell; and from my heart I wish you all blessedness both in this world and the next, which I have not the least doubt you will attain, if you look and pray to our Lord.

EMAN. SWEDENBORG."

This important letter* is interesting in several respects.

*_Bibliographical Note._—This letter is Document 2 in "Documents Concerning Swedenborg," compiled by R. L. Tafel. (London: Swedenborg Society. 1875. Vol. I, pp. 6-9.) In a foot-note at this point, Dr. Tafel says: "The Latin original of this letter was printed separately by Dr. Hartley in 1769 under the title: *"Responsum ad Epistolam ab amico ad me scriptam,"* and was reprinted in the *Aurora,* Vol. II, p. 224, in 1800. The first English translation was published by Mr. Hartley himself in his translation of Swedenborg's work, "On the Intercourse between the Soul and the Body," in 1770. There is a copy of the *"Responsum"* in the Library of the Massachusetts New-Church Union, Boston. A reprint of it was prefixed to Vol. VI of Tafel's Latin edition of the *"Arcana Coelestia,"* in 1838.

It gives, notwithstanding its brevity, a charmingly distinct and surprisingly complete impression of the man, in all his simplicity, devoutness, and serene confidence in his mission. Already it indicates the subsequent lines of division and conflict of opinion: his unquestioned dignity of character, his high official position, the magnitude of his work; then his astounding claims of having been called by the Lord Himself, in person, to a holy office, no less than that of ushering in the New Jerusalem by opening the inner meaning of the Word; and of having had his spiritual senses opened, enabling him to converse with spirits and angels, during the whole of his after life, a period of nearly thirty years.

The three points around which controversy has ever since raged are here distinctly brought forward: (1) the Appearing of the Lord before him; (2) the Opening of the Spiritual Sense of the Sacred Scriptures; and (3) the *"Visis et Auditis."* The first and the second, especially the second, have furnished the occasion of persistent and violent sectarian attacks; the third has given rise to popular and professional distrusts of his sanity. The great body of adverse opinions has to do with these three aspects of his personality and career.

In view of the above letter it is especially appropriate to begin the testimony of others by introducing that of the person whose suggestion prompted Swedenborg to write it.

Among Swedenborg's friends and acquaintances, one of the most worthy, and one of the earliest to accept his claims and to promulgate his doctrines openly by voice and pen, was the Rev. Thomas Hartley, a clergyman of the Church of England, and Rector of Winwick, Northamptonshire. According to the testimony of his acquaintances, and as the following quotations will show, he was a highly esteemed, well educated gentleman, an exemplary Christian, and the possessor of rare social graces. His impressions and opinions of Swedenborg, therefore, have more than ordinary significance. The story of how he came to a knowledge of

Swedenborg and his writings would be an interesting bit of history; but unfortunately little is known of the circumstances. He was the friend of William Cookworthy of Plymouth, the discoverer of the ingredients of porcelain, and the founder of the British Porcelain Manufacture; also of Dr. Henry Messiter, referred to by him as "a gentleman of a learned profession, and of extensive intellectual abilities." In company with these two friends, Mr. Hartley visited Swedenborg in 1769, and from that time until Swedenborg's death, he visited him frequently. In 1770, he translated and published Swedenborg's work, "On the Intercourse between the Soul and the Body," with an excellent preface. In 1778, in conjunction with Mr. Cookworthy, he published the first English translation of Swedenborg's work "Heaven and Hell," to which he wrote the preface, "which has been so much and so deservedly admired." The following extracts are made (1) from the letter to Swedenborg which called forth the above-quoted letter of Swedenborg to him; (2) from the above-mentioned prefaces; and (3) from a letter to the Rev. John Clowes, which Mr. Clowes afterwards incorporated in the preface to his translation of Swedenborg's "True Christian Religion." The extracts speak for themselves as to Mr. Hartley's scholarship, intelligence, and broad Christian charity. They are testimonials of extraordinary value, both intrinsic and historical.

### The Letter from Rev. Thomas Hartley to Swedenborg (1769):

"Most Respected and Beloved Sir,—

"I consider myself most highly favored, and I rejoice from my inmost heart, in having had the honor, which you lately granted me, of conversing with you; and also in your having been so kind and friendly towards me who am quite unworthy of such a favor. But your charity towards the neighbor, the heavenly benignity shining from your countenance, and your childlike simplicity, devoid of all vain

show and egotism, are so great, and the treasure of wisdom possessed by you is so sweetly tempered with gentleness, that it did not inspire me with a feeling of awe, but one of love, which refreshed me in my innermost heart. . . .

"In speaking with you every suspicion of flattery must be hushed. For what ground for flattery can there be, when I attribute everything in you, however great and extraordinary it may be, to the Lord, and not to yourself, and when I look upon you only as an instrument of His Mercy and great Kindness! But may I be permitted to offer honor and glory to the instrument—for this is well pleasing to the Lord; and may I be permitted to tell you from a heart full of gratitude, that I consider myself thrice blessed, that your writings, by the Divine Providence, have fallen into my hands? For from them, as from a living fountain, I have drawn so many things, as well for instruction and edification as for my delight, and I have been freed by them from so many fears, and from so many errors, doubts, and opinions, which held my mind in perplexity and bondage, that I seem to myself sometimes, as if transferred among the angels. May the Lord, the Highest and Best, forbid that I deceive myself with a vain and premature hope; and may He always keep me in a state of humility and repentance, anxious to shun all evil, and ready to do all good, so that I may safely and happily reach the goal of our destination in the Lord Jesus Christ.

"There are many things in my mind, dear Sir, that I should like to ask if time would permit; but may I be allowed to submit to you the following few: . . . [here he asks Swedenborg some theological questions, not to be answered by special letter; and he then continues:] Pardon my troubling you so much, but allow me still to add the two following points:

"First, If, perchance, after your departure from England, either Dr. Messiter, or I, or both of us, should be called upon publicly to defend your writings, . . . [here

follows the quotation already given in Swedenborg's letter, p. 310 above].

"Secondly, If, perchance, after your return to Sweden, some persecutions should be excited against you by the clergy, on account of your religion—which may God prevent—return, then, I beseech you, to England where you may dwell in safety. Dr. Messiter and myself will prepare for you a convenient place and house, either in town or in the country, and we shall provide for everything that may conduce to your well-being. This will be no trouble to us, but will give us the greatest possible pleasure.

"I commend myself to your favor and affection, and I am, and always shall be, my teacher and most distinguished friend, with all due reverence,

Your most obliged servant

Thomas Hartley.

East Malling, Kent. August 2, 1769.

To the Honorable Mr. Swedenborg."

The mutual affection and esteem expressed in these letters throws a warm light on the character of the men, and is equally creditable to both. The solicitude of Mr. Hartley for Swedenborg's safety and comfort suggests signs of approaching opposition to the spread of his doctrines. It is interesting as a matter of history that Swedenborg's reply to this letter was acknowledged by Mr. Hartley, August 14, 1769.*

Rev. Mr. Hartley's Preface to the "Intercourse between the Soul and the Body," "humbly addressed to the Universities of Great Britain," undertakes to prepare the reader for at least a fair, if not a favorable, impression of this extraordinary book. Some judicious and well directed remarks are made upon the deep-seated and long-standing materialism which has made the doctrine

*_Bibliographical Note._—The originals of both of Mr. Hartley's letters are in the Royal Library in Stockholm. The above quotation is taken from Tafel's "Documents Concerning Swedenborg," Vol. I, pp. 3-5.

of spiritual influx distasteful if not unintelligible to many. Further remarks are made upon the influence of this materialism in arousing an obstinate general prejudice against all extraordinary spiritual communications. While insisting that the ordinary means of God's appointment are not to be neglected, it is vigorously maintained that, in the light of history and of common religious experience, it is plain that special dispensations and means of communication are needed, and are on occasion provided. Admitting the danger of over-credulity in exposing us to all forms of delusion, imposture, and superstition, it is pointed out on the other hand that obstinate incredulity is just as dangerous in shutting us off from opportunities for getting new truth. Here the question arises, What is the basis of credibility in the case of extraordinary dispensations and spiritual communications? And here the "proof by miracles" is considered and put aside in favor of appeals to reason and to moral and spiritual evidence. All this makes way for the question as to the credibility of Swedenborg. Scripture prophesies are cited and the signs of the times are pointed at to show that the New Jerusalem may be expected. After dwelling with great earnestness and force upon the evident dire need of a new dispensation and of an enlightened messenger from heaven, Mr. Hartley asks, "Will not the Lord send some enlightened Seer with a message of peace and comfort to his people?" His answer follows.

From Hartley's Preface to "Intercourse between the Soul and the Body" (1770):

"He has done this in the person and writings of the Honorable Emanuel Swedenborg, who has for these twenty-and-five years past been favored with an open vision of the spiritual world, and still continues to enjoy the same, and to communicate to his brethren many curious, wonderful, and instructive discoveries relating to his converse with angels and the things of their kingdom, as may be seen in

his other writings; so that infidels now can no longer plead that challenge for their unbelief, "Show us one that can testify of these things from his own knowledge, and we will believe", for such a witness, and a creditable one, too, is alive at this day. I have conversed with him at different times, and in company with a gentleman of a learned profession and of extensive intellectual abilities. We have had a confirmation of these things from his own mouth, and have received his testimony, and do both of us consider this our acquaintance with the author and his writings among the greatest blessings of our lives. We cannot doubt but that the same evidence which has appeared credible to us must appear the same to many others; and where men of liberal minds and education think otherwise, a single line will settle the difference betwixt us, viz.:

*Veniam petimusque damusque vicissim.*

But where any wrong bias, bigotry to a system, worldly interest, or a confirmed habit of unbelief, lead any to a determined opposition, there argument must lose its force on any subject, for *non persuadebis etiamsi persuaseris.* . . .

"That Baron Swedenborg's life, qualifications and high pretensions have passed through a strict scrutiny in his own country, as to every part of his character, moral, civil, and divine, is not to be doubted; and that he maintains great dignity, esteem, and friendship there with the great, the wise, and the good, I am well informed by a gentleman of that nation now residing in London; and from whose mouth I could relate an instance of the Author's supernatural knowledge as well known in the Court of Sweden, and not to be evaded or called in question, if the fact be as is related; but as I have not the Author's leave for this, I think not myself at liberty to mention it. Thus far I think that the credibility of Mr. Swedenborg, as a witness to the truth of what he relates, stands unimpeached: The extensive learning displayed in his writings evinces him to be the Scholar, and the Philosopher; and his polite behavior and address bespeak him the gentleman: He affects no honor,

but declines it; pursues no worldly interest, but spends his substance in travelling and printing, in order to communicate instruction and benefit to mankind; and he is so far from the ambition of heading a sect, that wherever he resides on his travels, he is a mere solitary and almost inaccessible, though in his own country of a free and open behavior; nor does he persuade any to leave that established church to which they belong. Till very lately he has not set his name to any of his theological works. He has nothing of the precisian in his manner, nothing of the melancholy in his temper, and nothing in the least bordering upon the enthusiast in his conversation or writings, in the latter of which he delivers facts in the plain style of narrative, speaks of his converse with spirits and angels with the same coolness that he treats of earthly things, as being alike common to him. He proves all points of doctrine from scripture testimony, always connects charity and good life with true faith, and is upon the whole as rational a divine as I ever read. If these parts of character may be allowed to gain credit to his testimony, I think it may be pronounced concerning him, that he is the most extraordinary Messenger from God to man that has appeared upon the earth since the apostolic age, and that he may properly be called the living apostle of these days." *

The Preface to "Heaven and Hell" is a more elaborate treatment of the considerations presented in the preface to "On the Intercourse between the Soul and the Body." It runs to fifty-three pages quarto. All the natural objections to the credibility of the latter book are even stronger in the case of the former. But it must be said, in this case, that the arguments against these objections are even more strongly put; and it may be added that there are few finer

**Bibliographical Note.*—Preface to Swedenborg's *De Commercio Animæ et Corporis,* translated by the Rev. Thomas Hartley, M.A., and published under the title "A Theosophic Lucubration on the Nature of Influx." London: 1770. Copy in the Library of the New-Church Theological School, Cambridge, Mass.

pieces of apologetic writing than this Preface. By appealing to history and to the constitution of man, Mr. Hartley argued that the Lord had been "graciously pleased at sundry times and in divers manners, as occasions and the needs of the church might require it, to make extraordinary discoveries and revelations to particular persons." He accounted for the current prevalent disbelief of all extraordinary or supernatural dispensations, by the rank materialism of the time which had banished faith in all things supernatural; to this was added the worldliness and the commercialism of the age, together with a reckless devotion to a life of pleasure. As a result, the minds of the people were disqualified for a proper consideration of spiritual matters. Then again the rationalism of the age begat an intellectual pride and a skeptical habit which made the mind impervious to new truth of a supernatural order. He insisted that simplicity, a right disposition of the will and affections, best and most surely adapted the mind to the truth, that so a state of suitableness was secured, more to be relied upon than any merely external rational process. This is meant to be an appeal to a deeper reason; and therefore the credibility of "extraordinary dispensations," "fresh disclosures from the other world," and "communications with spirits," is a matter to be determined in each case by due consideration of the circumstances. With reference to Swedenborg's disclosures, and in particular to those of the book in hand, he argues that their credibility is guaranteed by the character of the man, the mode of the disclosure, and the nature of the thing disclosed. On these points he writes as follows:

From Hartley's Preface to "Heaven and Hell" (1778):

"It must be owned, that the following treatise contains so many wonderful particulars relating to the worlds of spirits, warranted for truth by the ocular testimony of the writer, according to his solemn affirmation, as would appear impossible for man in this mortal body to come at the knowl-

edge of, but for the like instances delivered down to us on the authority of the sacred records, and the promise therein made to the church of the continuance of such manifestations in it: and the visions of our author must appear to us the more extraordinary, when we consider that they were of the most exalted nature—as not being exhibited objectively to the bodily organs or external senses, nor yet merely intellectual by representations in the mind, but purely spiritual, whereby spiritual beings and things were actually seen and perceived by his spiritual senses, as one spirit beholds another; and answering to those expressions in Scripture of 'being in the spirit' and of being 'caught up by the spirit'; as likewise to that rapt trance, or ecstasy of the apostle, during which he says, 'whether he was in the body, or out of the body, he could not tell (II Cor. xii. 2).' The same question that has been asked here has been briefly noticed already, viz: If a testimony to so extraordinary a dispensation does not require the extraordinary seal of miracles to render it credible? To which it may be further answered, that many of the prophets worked no miracles, and yet were believed upon their own private testimony; and that we believe many things of the highest consequence in religion upon human authority, where the persons transmitting and delivering them appear properly qualified and circumstanced to give credibility to what they relate. But this argument has been considered in the Preface to the 'Theosophick Lucubration' [the name of Mr. Hartley's translation of Swedenborg's *De Commercio*] before mentioned; and from the reasons adduced, and such as are ready to be further produced if called for, we look upon our author's testimony as worthy of our acceptation in this matter, and venture to rely on his known integrity and piety, and his disinterested and indefatigable labors to instruct the world in the most important truths relating to salvation, at the expense of his fortune and the sacrifice of all worldly enjoyments, during more than the last thirty years of his life. And if we further reflect that the whole scope and

tendency of his writings is to promote the love of God and of our neighbor; to inculcate the highest reverence for the Holy Scriptures; to urge the necessity of practical holiness; and to confirm our faith in the Divinity of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ: these considerations, I think, may be allowed of as sufficient credentials (as far as human testimony can go) of his extraordinary mission and character, and as convincing marks of his sincerity and truth; especially as we have to add, upon the credit of two worthy persons (one of them a learned physician who attended him in his last sickness), that he confirmed the truth of all that he had published relating to his communications with the world of spirits, by his solemn testimony a very short time before he departed this life in London, Anno Dom. MDCCLXXII.

"Reader, might it not seem a wonder if a person of so extraordinary and apostolical a character should better escape the imputation of madness than the prophets of old? And accordingly some have given out that he was beside himself; in particular, that it was occasioned by a fever which he had about twenty years before his death. Now it is well known by all his acquaintance, that our author recovered of that fever after the manner of other men; that his extraordinary communications commenced many years before that time; and that his writings, both prior and subsequent to it, entirely harmonize and proceed upon the same principles with an exact correspondence; and that in his whole conversation, transactions, and conduct of life, he continued to the end of it the same uniform, excellent man. Now if to write many large volumes on the most important of all subjects with unvaried consistency, to reason accurately, and to give proofs of an astonishing memory all the way; and if thereto be joined propriety and dignity of character in all the relative duties of the Christian life; if all this can be reconciled with the true definition of madness, then there is an end of all distinction between sane and insane, between wisdom and folly. . . .

"As there is a correspondency, or mutual relation, between rightly disposed minds and the truth in general, so likewise there is a particular correspondency or congruity between certain minds and certain truths in particular, producing an aptitude in the former to receive the latter as soon as offered, and that by a kind of intuition without reasoning; and hence it comes to pass, that such as have a remarkable fitness for this or that particular class of truths (which we usually term genius) are less qualified for any considerable proficiency in certain others. Thus the mathematician seldom excels in metaphysical knowledge; and he that may be very expert in systematical divinity, is oftentimes a stranger to mystical theology; one member supplying what another lacketh, whilst all may learn thereby to esteem and love one another, and praise the Lord for his diversity of gifts for the common benefit of his church. Let not such as walk in the simplicity of a naked faith, without needing any other evidence; let not such, I say, censure in the following book what they do not understand, or cannot receive; as it may be of use to others, who are led more in the way of knowledge than themselves. We judge not them, nay, love them; wherefore then should they come short of us in charity? Are we not brethren, and travelling to the same good land? Why then should we fall out by the way? Even the scribes could say, as touching Paul: 'If a spirit or angel hath spoken to him, let us not fight against God (Acts xxiii. 9)': and who can say, that what this our author delivers to us, as from vision and revelation from the other world, is not the very truth? . . .

"It is allowed that our author does not, in all places throughout his writings, follow the commonly received interpretations of the Scriptures; but so neither do all churches, nor all expositors in the same church. Though as to life and Godliness, and consequently what pertains to salvation, the Scriptures are sufficiently plain, yet with respect to many difficult and mysterious parts of them, they continue wrapped up in a venerable obscurity, to be opened

according to the needs and states of the church to the end of the world; and we doubt not to affirm, that the highly illuminated Swedenborg has been instrumental in bringing hidden things to light, and in revealing the spiritual sense of the sacred Records above any other person, since the Church became possessed of that divine treasure." *

In his letter to Rev. John Clowes, Mr. Hartley congratulated Mr. Clowes on his having undertaken to translate Swedenborg's last great work, "True Christian Religion," and then goes on to give his impressions of the man, and his reasons for accepting his claims and his teachings. He considers the objections the reader would naturally urge, and the hindrances in the way of perceiving and acknowledging the truth presented Two main hindrances operate: "wilful attachments to sinful habits, called in the Scripture the *hardening of the heart through the deceitfulness of sin";* and "intellectual prejudices which blind the eye of the mind, so that the light of truth cannot shine into it". He dwells with great earnestness upon the conditions of the time as pointing to the fulfilment of the prophesy about the coming of the New Jerusalem, He affirms his full conviction that this prophesy is fulfilled through the instrumentality of Swedenborg.

FROM THE LETTER OF REV. THOMAS HARTLEY TO REV. JOHN CLOWES (1781?):

"The Writings of this honorable man recommend themselves, at first sight, to the discerning reader by their genuine simplicity, by the profound veneration of the author for the Sacred Scriptures, and also by his deep penetration into and his clear elucidation of their Spiritual Sense and the mysteries contained therein, carrying with them a convincing evidence to the judgment of simplified impartial minds,

*Bibliographical Note.—Preface to Swedenborg's "Heaven and Hell," translated by the Rev. Thomas Hartley, M.A., London: 1778. Pages 31-33, 35, and 36. Copy in the Library of the New-Church Theological School, Cambridge, Mass.

between which and the truth there is a certain congruity that disposes the former for an immediate reception of the latter; and this simplicity is termed in Scripture, the single eye, according to those words of our Lord (Matt. vi. 22), 'If thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light'. . . .

"The great Swedenborg was a man of uncommon humility; and so far from affecting to be the head of a sect, that his voluminous writings in divinity continued almost to the end of his life to be anonymous publications; and I have some reason to think that it was owing to my remonstrance with him on this subject, that he was induced to prefix his name to this his following last work. He was of a catholic spirit, and loved all good men of every church, making at the same time all candid allowance for the innocency of involuntary error; but as he found himself obliged to point out the false doctrines in the several churches with an impartial freedom, it must be expected that his writings will meet with opposition from bigots in all churches. . . .

"Our author ever kept the Holy Scriptures in his view; they were his light and guide, his shield and buckler on all occasions; his reasonings were grounded on their authority; and he is abundantly copious in the proofs he draws from them in support of whatever doctrine he advances. On this foundation he builds, and a surer one no can can lay; he expounds the lively oracles by their harmonizing sense in different parts of them; and opens their spiritual meaning, like the scribe instructed unto the kingdom of heaven; and of this he has, in particular, given us satisfying evidence in the exposition of the Apocalypse. And yet let it be remarked here, that however high he stands in the character of the enlightened divine; however zealous he appeared for truth, and the instruction of his brethren; and lastly however self-denying, in his own particular, as to gratification and indulgences, even within the bounds of moderation; yet nothing severe, nothing of the precisian appeared in

him; but on the contrary, an inward serenity and complacency of mind were manifest in the sweetness of his looks and outward demeanor; and so far is he in his writings from affecting any stoical stiffness or severity, that in several parts of them, he allows to Christian liberty its full scope, and nowhere censures social entertainments and amusements properly conducted. . . .

"As the credibility of Swedenborg's extraordinary dispensation, in respect to his commerce with the invisible worlds, would receive addition from his private good character, I was accordingly led to call upon him by letter to publish some particulars of himself for the satisfaction of the public, which he answered, giving me some account of himself and family which was confirmed to me by some that well knew him in his own country; together with the honors with which he was dignified there as a senator of the Equestrian Order of Nobles, by the high esteem in which he was held by the Royal Family in Sweden, and also by the most pious and excellent men in that kingdom; as also with some other memorable particulars, not here to be mentioned. The above mentioned letter to me I have given in my translation of a small treatise written by our Author, 'On the Nature of Influx,' under the prefixed title of 'A Theosophic Lucubration.' I am to observe here that I am indebted to Christopher Springer, Esqr., formerly of the Senatorial Order in Sweden, who has resided many years in London, for many satisfactory circumstances relating to his life and character; and yet the great Swedenborg, who employed his peculiar talents and the greatest part of a long life for the benefit of his brethren, high in honor and esteem as he was, lived several years in an obscure lodging in London, in which he ended his days. O Lord, how wonderful are thy dealings with thy most favored servants, to bring them into a conformity to thy low and abject state when on Earth, in order to exalt them to that glory which thou hast prepared for them! I saw him in the beginning of his last sickness, and asked him if he was comforted by

the society of angels as before; and he answered that he was. I returned home, about a day's journey from London; and heared soon after that he was near his departure, and expressed his desire to see me; but, some hindrances to the visit happening at that time, I did not embrace the opportunity as I should have done, for those hindrances might have been surmounted. My neglect on this occasion appears to me without excuse, and lies very heavy on my mind to this day. . . .

"It may reasonably be supposed, that I have weighed the character of our illustrious Author in the scale of my best judgment, from the personal knowledge I had of him; and from a diligent perusal of his writings and according thereto, I have found him to be the sound divine, the good man, the deep philosopher, the universal scholar, and the polite gentleman. And I further believe that he had a high degree of illumination from the spirit of God, was commissioned by Him as an extraordinary messenger to the world, and had communication with angels and the spiritual worlds beyond any since the time of the apostles; and as such I offer his character to the public, solemnly declaring, to the best of my knowledge, I am not herein led by any partiality or private views whatever, being much dead to every worldly interest, and accounting myself as unworthy of any higher character than that of a penitent sinner. I pretend to no authority over the mind of the reader, and if I have erred in anything here delivered, I trust that it is in the innocency of error, and shall be retracted on conviction. I have farther declared it as my belief, that we draw nigh to the latter days spoken of in Scripture, and that the woes are already begun which are to prepare the way for the New Jerusalem from above, to the truth of which our honored Author appears to have been called to bear a particular testimony, in which vocation I believe he will soon be succeeded by others. The doctrine of a judgment-work approaching, will meet with no favorable reception from those that are of this world, and satisfied with the present

condition of it; but the children and heirs of that kingdom, which shall have its sure foundations in Christian love, righteousness, and peace, will, through the power of faith, be enlightened to see the foregoing scourges as preparatory to the manifestation of Christ's glorious kingdom on Earth, and, together with all the present mourners in Zion, be enabled to rejoice in hope with the divine Witness in the Revelations, saying and earnestly praying, Come Lord Jesus, come quickly!" *

The testimony furnished by the above extracts has exceptional value both from the personal and the historical point of view. That a man of Mr. Hartley's education and cultivation, with the associations, interests, and prepossessions of a clergyman of the Church of England, should have been so much attracted to Swedenborg personally, and should have given such spontaneous and complete credence to his claims and to his doctrines, is a significant fact well worth careful consideration. It is evident that he fully appreciated the extraordinary character of the claims and the doctrines, and that he weighed them conscientiously and intelligently in the light of history and of the existing conditions. He had the advantage of an intimate acquaintance with the man, Swedenborg, and he evidently studied his doctrines with a critical as well as an historical and practical insight into the nature of the revolution they would effect in the world of religious thought. His analysis of the historical situation is penetrating and complete; his exposition of Swedenborg's mission is remarkably true to its spirit and substance; and his presentation of the doctrines is duly proportioned and discriminating. In the Letter to Mr. Clowes, he dwells on perhaps the two most distinctive and most revolutionary features of Swedenborg's mission: his work as an interpreter of the spiritual meaning of the Bible; and

*_Bibliographical Note._—Letter from the Rev. Thomas Hartley to the Rev. John Clowes, incorporated by the latter in the preface to his translation of Swedenborg's "True Christian Religion." London: 1781. Pp. vi, xii, xv, xvii. Copy in the Library of the New-Church Theological School.

his description of the coming of the New Jerusalem. Having grasped the significance of these two features, his conviction was fully established as to the genuineness of Swedenborg's claims, and he thenceforward labored constantly and zealously to establish those claims, to extol Swedenborg's character, and to propagate his doctrines. In this work he had some faithful and efficient companions and helpers. William Cookworthy co-operated with him in the translation of "Heaven and Hell"; Dr. Messiter accompanied him on some of his visits to Swedenborg; the Rev. John Clowes gave him valuable support and most effective co-operation; Christopher Springer, expert Swedish politician and personal friend of Swedenborg, furnished him with direct and authoritative information about Swedenborg's life and standing at home. This little group, the first germ of organized effort to propagate the doctrines of Swedenborg, serves as a radiating center for tracing the growth and direction of opinion, and is historically connected with other groups and propagating enterprises. Of these men Clowes had no personal acquaintance with Swedenborg; Cookworthy left no testimony in writing; Messiter set forth his opinions in letters written at Swedenborg's request, from which we shall presently quote; while Springer, writing to Abbé Pernety in 1782, incidentally mentions that Hartley was Swedenborg's "most intimate friend," and then remarks about himself:

"As to what relates to myself, I cannot give you a reason for the great friendship Swedenborg entertained for me, who am not a learned man. It is true, we were good friends in Sweden; but that this friendship should have become as constant as it has been, I never expected."

At the request of Swedenborg, Dr. Henry Messiter sent to Robert Hamilton, R. Traill, and Alexander Gerard, Professors of Theology in the Universities of Edinburgh, Glasgow, and Aberdeen respectively, some of Swedenborg's books, as a present from the author. In each case he ad-

dressed a letter to the recipient introducing the author and explaining the gift. He received from all polite notes of acknowledgment, expressing interest and purpose to read the books. This incident is significant in throwing some light upon Swedenborg's personal relations and upon his method of distributing his books. It shows also the kind of impression he made on men of professional character and standing, that a man of Dr. Messiter's position should have entered so cordially into this kind of co-operation. As appears from Mr. Hartley's remarks, Dr. Messiter was one of Swedenborg's regular visitors, and attended him during his last illness.

LETTER OF DR. HENRY MESSITER TO ROBERT HAMILTON, PROFESSOR OF DIVINITY IN THE UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH (1769):

"October 23, 1769.

"Rev. Sir,

As I have not the honor of knowing your name, I hope you will not attribute that deficiency in the superscription to a want of respect towards the professor of a science which I have ever held in the greatest veneration.

"The Hon. Mr. Swedenborg has desired me to send you, as a present, some of his late Tracts, which, should you think proper to peruse them I doubt not but you will consider them as very extraordinary, and certainly more proper to be submitted to the scrutiny of gentlemen of your dignity and profession, than to that of those whose want of a proper scale of literature but ill qualifies them to judge of their sublimity. As I have had the honor of being frequently admitted to the author's company when he was in London, and to converse with him on various points of learning, I will venture to affirm, that there are no parts of mathematical, philosophical, or medical knowledge, nay, I believe I might justly say, of human literature, to which he is in the least a stranger; yet so totally insensible is he of his own merit, that I am confident he does not know that he

has any; and, as he himself says of the angels, he always turns his head away on the slightest encomium. What he knows of the most interesting and noble science of all, I most humbly submit, Sir, to your better judgment: yet I must say, that though I have read much of the historical and mystical proofs of the truth of Scripture, I have never yet met with any assertions so wonderfully affecting the mind of man; and wherever I have read of anything of this nature approaching in some measure to the gift of our author, it has generally been delivered by persons whose education would scarcely secure them from the censure of enthusiasm or imposure. I should be glad, Sir, to be honored with a line from you when you get the books, and happy to receive your opinion when it may be suitable to you to confer that favor on me.

I am, Sir, with the greatest respect,

Your most obedient and most humble servant,

H. MESSITER.

At the Broom House, Fulham, Middlesex." *

In a postscript to the above letter, Dr. Messiter gives the names of the books contained in the package, as follows: *Summaria Expositio* (in English translation), *Arcana Coelestia, De Coelo et Inferno, De Nova Hierosolyma et ejus Doctrina Coelesti, De Telluribus in Universo,* and *De Equo Albo.*

In the letter to the Professor of Divinity in the University of Glasgow, R. Traill, Dr. Messiter is more specific in his tribute to Swedenborg's character. He says:

"As I have had often the honor of conversing with him, I can with great truth assert, that he is truly amiable in his morals, most learned in his discourse, and superlatively affable, humane, and courteous in his behavior; and this

**Bibliographical Note.*—Tafel's "Documents," p. 522, Vol. II, Doc. 260.

The correspondence from which this letter is selected was first printed in *The Intellectual Repository for the New Church,* London, Vol. III, First Series, No. XXIV, Oct.-Dec. 1817, pp. 449-455.

joined with a solidarity of understanding and penetration far above the level of an ordinary genius."

Besides his activity and co-operation in this instance, Dr. Messiter showed his zeal for the propagation of Swedenborg's doctrines in other ways. He furnished to Augustus Nordenskjoeld the manuscript of "The Coronis; or Appendix to the True Christian Religion," the last of Swedenborg's theological works. Along with Mr. Hartley and Dr. Hampe, "a learned man, who had been tutor of George II," he was one of the intimate friends of Swedenborg during his latter days in London. He lived to see the beginnings of organized effort to print and publish the works of Swedenborg; in particular, the association of Henry Peckitt, retired surgeon and a man of means, taste, and literary accomplishment, William Spence, M.D., also a surgeon, George Adams, "mathematical instrument maker to the King" and author, Robert Hindmarsh, printer, Benedict Chastanier, French surgeon, and Carl Frederic Nordenskjold, to print and publish the *"Apocalypsis Explicata."*

(*To Be Continued.*)

## "THE SOUL'S SINCERE DESIRE." *

By the Rev. John Goddard.

ONE of the most attractive features of the small volume by Glenn Clark, entitled "The Soul's Sincere Desire," is the statement that the conclusions arrived at are based upon the author's own experience, beginning with a series of remarkable answers to prayer. But still more interesting and engaging was the experience of an *inner gift* of peace and happiness, with a sense of liberation from all feelings of anger, all fear, and other life-destroying emotions, which revealed the possibility and the actuality of the coming of the kingdom of heaven in the midst of the practical affairs of this world.

After an experience of this kind, lasting for two years, a student in the institution where the author was teaching, said to him one day, "I wish very much you would tell me how you pray. Won't you tell me sometime?" He had never been asked before, but the answer, which came in a moment, led to the volume before us.

At the basis of the book is the ever-present thought (not stated, nor resulting from any argument, or contrast with any former belief, but the simple assumption) of the fact of one God, a God of Love, close by, within the heart, only awaiting man's consent to manifest Himself in joy and peace and power, as soon as man removes the selfish obstacles in the way of love. The whole explanation of the experience is found in the words of Psalm and Gospel, namely: "The Lord is my shepherd," "Our Father, who art in the heavens." This assumption of the truth of One God of Love, and of His inner presence in the heart when open to that love, is of course in perfect harmony with our own teachings.

Another feature attractive to those of our own faith is what seems like a perception or experience of the fact of

**The Soul's Sincere Desire.* By Glenn Clark. Boston: Little, Brown & Co. 114 pp., 12 mo. $2.00. 1925.

a Divine symbolism in the Scripture. Not that the term "correspondence" is used. There are no signs in the book of any direct acquaintance with the New-Church teachings, and an exchange of letters with the author indicates a lack of knowledge of them. He dwells much on the thought of parable in the Bible teaching in both Testaments, as expressed in the words, "Without a parable spake He not unto them"; "All these things were done in parables"; "I will open my mouth in parables; I will utter things which have been kept secret from the foundation of the world." He also traces a parabolic relation between the laws of health in the body and the soul. He shows a symbolic relation between physical and spiritual culture. The physical culturist directs that when one rises in the morning, he spend fifteen minutes in stretching all the muscles of the body by various exercises, including the practice of deep breathing, making use of eleven-elevenths of the lungs instead of a small fraction. Then, answering to this as a parable he gives the direction to begin the day with the *spiritual exercise* of prayer. As the muscles are stretched to carry the circulation of the blood to all parts of the body, so begin the day with the prayer for the Divine presence and direction in all its practical affairs. As the muscles employed by the lungs are stretched by deep breathing—first by the *indrawing of the air,* bringing purification to the blood through the burning of impurities by oxygenation, so *sincere and genuine prayer,* or the prayer of the heart, as distinguished from a form of words or gestures, brings a Divine and healing influence from heaven. And as the *inbreathing* of the purifying air is impossible without an *outbreathing*, removing the poisons extracted by the air, so the purification of the human spirit by the Divine Spirit requires that *man himself shall do his part in the purification of his thoughts, intents, and deeds.* It requires, therefore, constant watchfulness, discovery and rejection of whatever is wrong, as well as all that looks to self or worldly interest alone. That

is, it requires *the shunning of evils as sins,* as we are so insistently taught.

But the main purpose now is not to verify our own teachings, or show how they are beginning to be recognized in the best perceptions of the Christian world, but rather to employ the experience of this author to understand, emphasize, and make a larger use of, our own teachings.

He does not seek a substitute for the Divine law of overcoming evil. He does not say, "There is no evil; all is good; all is God." Nor that man is purified by *right thinking* alone. He recognizes not only the fact of evil, but the fact that evil consists, not merely in wrong deeds, but in those states of mind which lead one to concentrate one's thoughts upon oneself and one's own selfish interests, whether those interests be material or mental—whether one values supremely wealth, or social station, or selfish glory in any of its thousand forms, or even one's own salvation in another world. The selfish or sinful man is he who leaves out the thought of God as the constant and only source of true love and life and joy and peace, and fails to make that love, or God's life, the supreme desire of the heart. And so true prayer is not a prayer for *things,* however desirable the things may seem, but it is a prayer for those states of mind which, when applied to the daily life, will purify and ennoble all its deeds, and make them helpful and constructive,—deeds which involve and follow the prayer, "*Thy* Kingdom come, *thy* will be done *on earth* as in heaven." True prayer is both an *outbreathing,* or rejection of every evil desire, and an *inbreathing* of the purifying air, the oxygen of heaven. Man has his part in both.

This author condemns therefore all prayer that stops at material things, such as (for instance) praying for money, for endowing a church or an educational institution, that is, if the prayer stops there. He quotes the words of the Apostle James: "Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss."

"Not until we set our affections on things above rather than on things of the earth," he says, "will God grant the requests of his children."

And yet he recognizes that many petitions *which take the form* of asking for things, are often answered; and he gives as the reason, this:

> The petitions asked in this way, that is, "without a parable," have been answered, because they were first translated,—if not consciously in the mind, then unconsciously in the heart of the petitioner,—*into a parable.* The petitioner was really looking at the spiritual Reality, and not at the outward material manifestation of fact or thing. Such prayers for things are answered, but only when the spirit of simple trust prevails,—that surrender to the Divine will, uttered or unexpressed, told in the words "not my will, but thine, be done." Thy will—whether the seeker knows it or not—is always the spiritual will, just as "my will" is always the material will.

Then he continues with the thought that greater than speaking or praying in parables is the practice of *living in parables,* doubtless remembering the Gospel statement that "all these things"—the acts of Jesus—"were *done* in parables."

He contrasts reality with facts. We naturally identify the two words. He speaks of the quarrels, hatreds, covetings, treacheries and deceits of experience as *facts*—things which are done or made by man.

> But Reality, he says, does not consist of that which is made or done, but of that which eternally *is. Love is*—quarrels are made; *joy is*—unhappiness is made; *truth is*—lies are made; *loyalty is*—betrayals are made; *purity is*—impurity is made; *life is*—sickness is made.

The author thus recognizes human freedom or its abuses. Jesus looked straight through facts of disorder which were of man's making to the realities.

After illustrating the true object of prayer as being the desire for the spirit of God, or the spirit of love, which is the spirit of reality, he contrasts the true with the untrue method of prayer. Recognizing and expelling the

wrong thought, or wrong feeling, (including such states as fear, distrust, hatred, dislike, unforgiveness), as we expel the poisoned air from the lungs, we are prepared to receive the life-giving air of heaven. Then, (speaking from experience) he tells how we may know that our prayer is true by the answer that comes. If we pray for deliverance from fear, and at the close find that fear gone,—if we ask for deliverance from hatred or dislike, and find that gone, we may know that the prayer is answered. And so on.

Thus true prayer requires a true life—not only a right life of deeds, but a right life of motives, which is the only true life.

The effect of prayer described by this author is doubtless that experience described in the apostolic writings as the presence of the Holy Spirit. It is the experience which came upon the disciples at Pentecost, as told in the book of "Acts of the Apostles," and illustrated by various results which followed the Apostles' labors in succeeding generations. This wonderful experience was almost extinguished when the adoption of the tri-personal thought of God destroyed the conception of God as Love, and substituted the thought of Christ the Son as a sacrifice to the anger of the Supreme Deity; and when salvation through faith or sacrament took the place of the religion of the heart and of the life.

The work appears to indicate the advent of a new Christian experience, based on perception, in harmony with the New-Church revelations.

As soon as we learn to apply earnestly what has been revealed as the "doctrine of life for the New Jerusalem"; as soon as we learn not merely to make our lives right in the light of men, but true in the sight of heaven; as soon as we learn to overcome not only what is hurtful to us, but what is sinful; as soon as we take to heart that advice given by John Bigelow (the New-Churchman who was our minister to France under Abraham Lincoln) in the work entitled "Resist Beginnings," and shun the first mental ap-

proaches of the murderous, impure, deceitful and covetous disposition, resisting them by prayer; and especially when we shun the first beginnings of the love of selfish glory, or the love of power—the deepest and most insidious evils of all—then we shall experience the presence of the one Lord of Love, with its peace and joy. But we must begin with the correction of the outer deeds, and with faithfulness to the Divine law of use in the daily duties. This will be the corrective of those counterfeits of the Holy Spirit which have afflicted the church throughout the ages, and which the Savior Himself foretold in His warning to beware of false Christs and prophets, showing signs and wonders. This experience of the Divine peace and joy will be hastened if we learn to pray without ceasing, by word and deed and self-examination, for the heavenly guidance in the common affairs of life, especially if, in the cares and worries and pains and all other hard experiences, we remember that the Lord's love is with us, in them all—that they are friends in disguise.

Listen to these words of another author:

> Men of spiritual awareness in all lands feel that a time has come in the history of man when he must take a step into a higher range of being, or else lose and slip back. . . . The Christian era lies ahead of us.

This little work will be helpful to all who are seeking truth by way of the heart—to all who are asking the disciples' question on that last night of the Savior's life: "How wilt thou manifest Thyself to us and not to the world?"—the question which brought the reply: "If a man love me, he will keep my words; and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." It is a matter of life—life in the spirit as well as life in the act. So live, and He, now ascended above the *separate* earthly realm, and become one with the Father, who in His Divine Humanity dwells near to us all, will make His abode with us today.

JOHN GODDARD.

## DR. GORDON'S AUTOBIOGRAPHY.*

OF recent biographies that of the Rev. George A. Gordon, D.D., minister of the Old South Church, Boston, since 1884, should be of interest to all New-Churchmen, not so much from the significance of the man himself as from that of the theological conflict in which he has been a conspicuous leader. Moreover, it is told by himself, and therefore absolutely from his own point of view; and it is so interspersed with anecdote and humor as to be anything but dull reading.

As to his purpose in writing his loosely constructed autobiography, the author himself tells us that it was "to exhibit certain principles of human life through some of the experiences of an individual who early set his heart upon an educated mind." To one who might remark that there is a higher aim in life than that, a sufficient reply might be that, had Dr. Gordon's heart desires been different, he could not have become the important leader he has been in the battle of truth against falsity.

As to those things that "give moment and interest to the record of any man's life," the doctor instances the following three as essential, remarking that he believes that he meets the conditions fairly well:

> The first is that the universal experiences of life should have meant much to the writer; the second essential is that experiences of more than ordinary range should have been his; the third essential is that the truth and nothing but the truth should be told.

Dr. Gordon was born of Scotch ancestry at Pitodrie, Aberdeenshire, in 1853, and was reared in the strict Calvinistic faith. He came to America when eighteen; for

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**My Education and Religion; An Autobiography.* By GEORGE A. GORDON, D.D. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co. 1925. 352 pp., 8vo., illus. Cloth, $4.00.

some years earned his living by manual labor, and spent his spare time in literary studies; entered the Bangor Theological Seminary in September, 1874; was ordained a Christian minister at Temple, Maine, June 20, 1877; attended Harvard College from 1878 to 1881; and in August of the latter year took charge of the Second Congregational Church in Greenwich, Conn. In Jan. 1883, he received a call to the Old South Church, Boston; and on repetition of the call a year later, he accepted it, and was installed in his present pulpit on April 2, 1884.

By far the most important chapters of the book are those on "Installation Memories," and "The Sense of a Mission" (pp. 227-261). The first tells us of the controversy in the Council of the Old South Church over his installation. In commenting upon this he remarks that if the vote had rejected him, he would then have accepted an invitation that had been extended to him by Johns Hopkins University to teach ethics. But why should there have been controversy in the Church Council after the call had been given and accepted? It was because the young minister was known to be what we now call "modernistic" in his views; and when it finally came to the critical issue of the actual installation, the forces loyal to the Congregational tradition rallied themselves for the earnest but losing fight that then took place. The case was typical of the contest between the camps of the Fundamentalists and the Modernists of the present day, and exemplified the tendency of the better nature of man to reject as false a large part of the doctrinal platform of Protestantism as built up by such men as Calvin. As a youth Gordon had rejected the doctrine of predestination; and his subsequent education had led him to reject most of the rest of Calvinism, of Paulism, and of New England theology, as inconsistent with the religion of Jesus Christ. Insight concerning a most potent truth for the transformation of the old beliefs had come to him from within, as he tells us in the following words:

I well remember the day when the insight came to me, that

what New England theology, historic theology, needed to save its life, and all the precious things bound up with its life, was to universalize it, from the Being of God to the first and last human being in time, and through the whole process of its thought. This insight came to one who knew the scheme, in all its varieties and modifications, as well as he knew the Greek or the English alphabet, and who had gone over the whole expanse of it, times without number, in the hope of finding the key to its reasonableness; this insight came like a flash, it stood the test of examination; the longer it was reflected upon, the profounder and the more evident its truth seemed to me to become. God's will must be a will of creative love; it must be a will that no accident of sin or lapse in man can change; it must be a will forever on the side of our whole humanity; and the forms of its expression in the processes and powers of the Spirit must have one goal and one goal only, the redemption of mankind into the liberty, the glorious liberty of the sons of God. If this is not accomplished in time, as it plainly is not, the scene of the redemptive drama must be indefinitely extended. God is under the bonds of His own nature as the creator and lover of man, to show man what his supreme good is, to persuade him, both by the experience of righteousness and the folly of unrighteousness, to lift up his heart to what is always and eternally good. Death is an incident in the discipline of the soul; judgment is the incessant examination implied in the Divine education of the world; the final examination is final only as regards what had been done in time. The Judgment Seat of Christ is forever; the rational being, man or angel, is before it forever; it measures and records; it is the revelation of progress or failure, and always as the illumination of love, always as the light and impulse to the grander existence. The character of God is the life of the Christian religion; the character of God must be saved, whatever in the thoughts of men may be lost or changed. Let the character of God as revealed in Jesus the Lord have free course, and the issue will be that the truth will be seen to be the highest good, and the highest good the absolute truth for man's life. Metaphysics and ethics thus meet in mutual eternal support; the highest metaphysics, the loving Being of God, becomes the highest ethics, love as the sovereign good, and the highest ethics, love as man's need and good, becomes the ultimate truth of the universe, the eternal good-will of God to all souls in all worlds. My books have been, all of them, expositions of this fundamental change in theological thought. (Pp. 252-253.)

In view of all this, we cannot but regret that Swedenborg's writings seem never to have come to Dr. Gordon's attention, since they embody, consistently throughout, just the idea of the Lord as Infinite Love. And yet, had he become familiar with Swedenborg, and openly accepted his teachings, he probably could not have been so effective an instrument in the Lord's Providence for the vastation of Protestantism.

Signs of that vastation are evident on all sides in the chaotic condition in the world of religious thought today, concerning which Dr. Gordon says (pp. 239-242):

> Authority both of Church and of the Bible has been lifted from a large part of the Christian world. The result is an indefinite number of conflicting opinions upon every subject in the whole range of Christian faith. . . . When the authority that has kept them ignorant has gone, men seek for truth as those try to find their way home from afar in midnight darkness. Intellectual anarchy is the inevitable issue of cancelled authority; it is a beginning in independent intellectual life, it is a start toward the far-away goal of competent judgment. . . . The intellect of our churches, split into a thousand forms, (is) facing the task of finding a new and more adequate philosophy of the Christian religion, the experience of Christian men, and the meaning of God's great world in time. Honesty and ignorance, high purpose and sheer incompetence, heroic struggle and heroic failure* (are) everywhere manifest. We are free from a great but tyrannous tradition, but we (confront) a task requiring a thousand generations for its adequate performance. . . . A thousand answers . . . (are) making many precious things clear and sure, but rendering clearest and surest of all that the mind of the Christian Church (has) entered the vast, painful, and prophetic discipline of anarchy.

By way of comment on this loosely expressed passage we may say that in a sense the now disintegrating theology was the result of the intellectual labors of "a thousand generations" subsequent to Jesus Christ; and that in the chaos of the present-day scholarship in psychologic, phil-

*As to the latter, we would call our readers' attention to a significant article in *The Atlantic Monthly* for Feb. 1926, entitled "The Modernist's Quest for God."

osophic, theologic and Biblical fields, it is a forlorn hope that looks to a happy issue through the sole exercise of the self-intelligence of man in future generations, however prolonged. In this connection we may remark that Dr. Gordon himself instances (p. 260) Plato and Aristotle as "still our greatest philosophic contemporaries, . . . the best of all friends of the reflective intellect, the best of all guides and teachers in the long history of man's unfolding thought of his world." And yet of them he says, "They are often wrong, and infallible nowhere." But continuing his eulogy of such as they, he adds:

> This is the world of high insight and true wisdom round about every brave and faithful thinker; the solitary elevations on which he lives are crowded with august presences from all the great races and ages; they are his divinely commissioned allies; they strengthen the might of his fighting arm, and through their influence upon him become the living and invincible defenders of the supremely precious possessions of mankind.

This is mere rhetoric of a kind to accentuate man's intellectual conceit. But surely in view of the mental history of the race we can say with assurance that in the attainment of fundamental and supremely important truth man is incompetent either as discoverer or demonstrator. Without revelation from on high, acknowledged and accepted, mankind must ever remain in vacillating uncertainty. In the Providence of the Lord such revelation has been given, and is at hand: first, as the Word of the Lord in the canonical parts of the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments; second, as the deeper meaning in that Word, made known by the Lord through His servant, Emanuel Swedenborg, in the revelation imparted at His Second Coming.

As a final word we may express our conviction that as a philosopher Swedenborg surpassed both Plato and Aristotle; and that as an instrument of the Lord in imparting revelation, he has never been equalled.

B. A. WHITTEMORE.

# EDITORIAL DEPARTMENT

## THE PHILADELPHIA CONVENTION

It is more than usually appropriate this year to call Convention by the name of the city in which it met. Probably delegates and visitors never enjoyed a city more, or in better weather. The automobile was much in evidence; many delegates and visitors had motored from a distance; and in the intervals between meetings suburbs, parks, and sweeping boulevards were in easy reach. All were appreciatively conscious of the commodious buildings of the Philadelphia Society. Associating the place with the meetings unfailingly, was the abounding and delightful hospitality of the Philadelphia people. Whether shown in the numerous homes which were opened to delegates and visitors, or in the very pleasant quarters provided in hotels, or in the handsome reception and garden-party at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Gideon Boericke, the hospitality was of the heartiest. Convention is always a social gathering, whatever more it may be—an occasion for the renewal and making of acquaintances and friendships, and an opportunity for fellowship among an unaccustomed number of New-Churchmen. The Convention of 1926 was memorable in this respect.

The *Messenger* will have printed its detailed account of the Convention meetings by the time the REVIEW appears. Some impressions of the Philadelphia meetings have already appeared in print. Mr. Watanabe offers one in the *Messenger,* which is a heartfelt and appreciative expression of deep joy in the meetings. A characteristically happy and graceful and penetrating comment has appeared in the *New-Church Herald* from the pen of its Editor, the Rev. Charles A. Hall, the representative from the British Conference to the American Convention. Both are enthusiastic expressions. At this distance of

time a more general impression of the meetings seems fitting from us.

Mr. Hall observes how much less business is actually transacted on the floor of Convention than in the Conference. When one comes to think of it, the allotment made to discussions on general themes and to religious services in the very course of the business session of less than three days is very generous. The result of that would be, if it was not the increasing habit anyway, that Convention's business would be threshed over and determined on in committees and boards before and during the session. So in increasing measure it is. The practice is good for expedition's sake, and for a better consideration's sake, but by a few. It leaves the larger body of delegates too slightly informed and inducted into questions and issues, and in the position of falling in with recommendations, simply. As when they listen to the papers on the program, or attend on the religious services, the body of delegates and visitors are too nearly passive even in the conduct of the main business of Convention. No one can regret that the *Messenger* report went unheralded by the sort of discussion which has made a session or two in recent years disagreeable; but at the same time Convention cannot pride itself on a procedure which holds an important subject away from general discussion simply because some are bound to make the discussion acrimonious. That is as though Convention could not be treated as quite grown-up. It is also open to some expression at least of disturbance that a recommendation for the creation of a new General Pastor can be made to appear so peremptory by the rule against debate on reports, i.e., until all reports are in. Especially is there reason for remark on this when there were intimations of division in the Committee recommending, and a considerable division in the Council of Ministers, which again was reflected on the floor of Convention. It also appeared in the best accounts of the recommendation that the Committee of General Pastors put pretty largely for their own judgment the insistence of the Association concerned. If so much business is going to be relegated to com-

mittees, and this business perforce is, one would like to see them stand up to their responsibilities.

Not notable for the business transacted or the steps taken in its meetings, the Convention will have certain moves associated with it. If an edition of Swedenborg's "Marriage Love" with notes, interpretative and otherwise, is published in the near future, it will be with the practically unanimous sanction of the Council of Ministers at this Convention. A very slight step was taken toward strengthening our organization by organizing as a definite body the General Pastors and Presiding Ministers. Somehow our national meetings, or, for that matter, our state gatherings, do not come close to questions about methods of work in the actual parish, or to the conditions of our work. References to ungainsayable facts, like the absence of gains in membership, are put down as "pessimistic," when probably it is for our good never to gloss over, what a large and enthusiastic Convention tends to obscure, the fact that our organizations are losing in membership where practically all others in the land are gaining. Can we cite even increased effectiveness against that? For conceivably a few might still be very effective. The Chairman of the Council of Ministers was responsible for a move which brought ministers in good number to Convention. He also sought to invoke the principle of more rotation in office—but was asked to continue in a post which he has filled with executive ability, initiative, and grace. The Committee on "The Magnificat" made an interesting appeal for words of hymns on the life of charity, on brotherhood, and on larger social aspects of the Christian life, to be considered for inclusion in our hymnal. Years ago individuals urged this without response, when Convention might have been among the first church bodies to do this, an action eloquent of the New Christian thought and spirit. Announcement was made of the launching this year of a campaign for increased endowment of the Theological School. Mr. Hall, in his response to his official welcome from the President of Convention, made a friendly and what we are sure will be a very fruitful proposal —that the *New-Church Herald,* the weekly paper of the

British Conference, be sent to all ministers in this country, and the *Messenger* to all ministers of the Conference. This suggestion has already been acted upon favorably, and the exchange of periodicals in this way went into effect on both sides with the first issues of June. These and other changes and steps will have some association always, to the historian of our body anyway, with the Convention of 1926.

Along with its enjoyableness as a social gathering, the Philadelphia Convention will have meaning for most delegates and visitors as a stirring church gathering. It was the New Church in this land at worship as a body. Incidental services were often more than good. Although the address on Saturday noon by the Rev. Arthur Wilde was not put forward on the program altogether as a sermon in a religious service, still it was a finely shaped religious appeal to the young people particularly, but to old and young. It was stirring. It was solid. The Sunday morning service, as always, attained the greatest volume, and seemed to compact the seven or eight hundred in attendance into one body with a single purpose and a quickened spirit. The unaffected truth-telling of the sermon of Convention's President, and the simplicity of the Sacrament, moved all; but in song, and response, and prayer, there was a strong proffer of worship on the congregation's part.

If we did not face the conditions of our work, or arrive at or even seek more effective methods of work, or come to any different mind than we were of, anyway, on account of any discussion of evolution or any other theme, it would be agreed by all, we think, that by whatever means, Convention aroused an unusual interest, and gave an unusual degree of inspiration. Our wise worker in Japan, returning with an eager spirit to this land and to Convention after nine years, thought so. It ought to be said that his own presence and spirit, and our consciousness of his accomplishment in his native land, are quite largely to be credited with the freshened zeal which Convention felt. He has the frontier post of an apostle. He has seemed a providential selection for the work which has seen such good progress. There was a little splendor about

his figure as he spoke out in the Mission Board's Sunday evening meeting, using his own language, and free in gesture and word, so that we felt his ardor and his good sense. The missions meeting in general let Convention into a larger thought for the Church's mission. The personnel of the speakers in itself brought to mind other great tracts of the earth's surface where the message of the New Church was going. The view which Convention got of fields of unusual opportunity and response was sure to result in fresh interest at home. At the "Messenger House" books of every variety, and books destined to a variety of missionary uses, sold far beyond the sales at Cincinnati.

The "Messenger House," too, ingeniously aroused thought for the Church's mission at large. It was a specially decorated room at the Hotel Rittenhouse where the New-Church Board of Publication arranged exhibits which displayed to the eye many of the activities of the Church, not only its publication work, from the reproductions of Swedenborg's Manuscripts to our most recent books and periodicals, but the widespread missionary activities of the Church, the work and prospects of the Theological School, methods of church advertisement, and other activities. The room was a quiet retreat always. Several stimulating conferences took place there, initiated by the Board of Publication. An "Inscription Tea" filled the room with a jolly company that listened to a score or more of writers give an account of one another. The "House," all that was in it and all that happened in it, dramatized effectively the extent and character of the Church's work.

It is a question whether an object not expressly driven at is not often the real upshot of general meetings of a body of people. It is true that more prominently than the theme of "Liberty and Religion" there ran through the meetings a thought for the purpose of the Church. That was the set topic of a discussion or two, notably that in which the representative from the British Conference and the Dean of our ministers led one evening. It may be that that underlying pre-occupation with the purpose of the Church worked with circumstances to

accomplish what seems to the writer one of the general results, and one of the best results, of the Convention. That was the creation, or the stimulation anyway, of a large outlook on our work, and of a mental attitude and spirit in which diversities of opinion could move about without intolerant rebuke. The "Messenger House" helped to this end as a kind of wordless force, displaying as it did the variety and reach of our activities. The very setting of the meetings conduced to the same result, what with the roominess of the buildings in which we met, the length of the Church's life in Philadelphia from the first proclamation of the Church's teachings there by public lecture, and what with the large hospitality of the local people, in which the bond of New-Churchmanship was the perpetually evident inspiration. The presence of representatives from considerable distances, and from the constituency of other general bodies of the New Church, was bound to take the thought abroad. The liberality of the best discussion, lay and clerical, was, in our judgment, pronounced. Environment, personnel, history, all helped the thought into large places.

As a result the underlying thought for the purpose of the Church was likely, when it passed into words, to see that purpose ample and comprehensive. A narrow or limited purpose is narrower than a narrow idea. When the subject of the Church's purpose was directly addressed, or when it was involved in discussion, as it was much oftener, that purpose seemed to be given something like catholicity. Suggestions were made, to be sure, and positions were taken, and some things were phrased in a way that meant a pretty limited conception of the Church's reason for being. On the whole, however, if an interpreter may be allowed to say more than was put in so many words anywhere or at any time in the meetings except perhaps in one minister's remarks, the purpose of the Church was made about as comprehensive as it is.

On the whole it did not seem to be deemed to be the real purpose of the Church to set up ecclesiastical bodies, organize societies, and gain adherents. We have our organization. We have our churches and societies. We seek to build them up.

We want to see them grow. Whatever the Lord may accomplish in bringing about a thought and a life more nearly after His mind today in His Second Coming, unless we can make our organizations serviceable to Him in this, and unless they grow in their effectiveness, of course we, as professed workers with Him, are failing. That was urged. But organic growth was not put forward as the topmost effort even for us to make. And it helps to get our real purpose plainly before us to see what we would not grant that place to.

So it seemed, too, that it is not our main purpose even to teach a theology and gain conviction for it, although so much of our language sounds that way, as that we are to "disseminate the teachings." The Christian mind *is* to be built up by a fresh grasp of the Lord's truth, as He puts that truth before us in His Opened Word. We are ourselves, as professing New-Churchmen, to treasure that truth far more than we do, and to put our thought together in the light of it, and with the help of it, and out of the substance of it. We have to possess ourselves of the teachings of the Church far beyond what we do now, and present them, as they stand, and in the solution of many a problem of thought as well as of life, and in the blazing of new paths for Christian thought. With that teaching the New Church must labor inevitably, or give up its name. Yet it did not appear, we think, that the propagation of a theology, or the dissemination of teachings, is our uppermost concern.

Indeed, one other purpose which might come forward to take that place did not seem to be voted into it. It is not even our uppermost purpose to proclaim a certain life and to give men a vision of it. There is such a life, however, for the New Church to proclaim, and for it to see for itself. The New Church is so called because it is persuaded that the Lord has come again to bring men the Christian life anew. It has a life to proclaim which goes beyond what has been—the Christian life better understood, and capable of being lived with a depth of individual experience and a sweep of social application which it has not had. The Church wants above almost everything to proclaim that life, and give men some vision of it.

*Still,* a purpose lies beyond. Proclaim that life, she must; but there is more; and in the more lies the supreme purpose.

That more is not only to proclaim this life, but to do all she can to bring it about. That is why she is a worshipping body, not just a publishing body, or a reading circle, or a theological school. Here our meetings seemed to us to find the Church's supreme purpose. The Dean of our ministry was so minded, as he has ever been. The inspiriting words of the British representative were all to this effect. The Church's main purpose is to bring about in a man and among men that life which the Lord in His Second Coming is asking for, and offering. An effort to realize this life is what above all else the New Church must put her hand to. How clear it becomes that this is the supreme purpose when one reflects that it includes all the others. To this end we will strive to build up serviceable societies. To the end of coming to this life we will speak the message of it. The lesser purposes are taken care of in the supreme. And if it is not the supreme purpose, why is it capable of such a variety of statement? It is the salvation of men; it is the realization of the Divine will on earth; it is getting society into the image of heaven; it is bringing men to Christ as He comes again to them; it is presenting Him with followers and disciples. There is no end to the ways of putting the real business of the Church. And it was put in a great variety of ways in the meetings of Convention. May we say again of the service of Mr. Hall to Convention, that his words, full of that attractive combination of free thought on the teachings of the Church and a spirituality rested in the practise of the Spirit of the Lord, was at its maximum in holding up for the Church's supreme mission the life the Lord is now placing before men and seeking of them?

Wm. F. Wunsch.

## WHAT IS LOVE?

We all know what love is by experience; but when we are called upon to give a formal definition of it, when we try to say what it is universally and essentially, we are strangely

puzzled. The word "love" is in constant use by everybody, and we all know what in particular is meant by it. Swedenborg, in the first sentences of "Divine Love and Wisdom," enumerates the familiar instances of the love of parent and child, husband and wife, friend and friend, king and subjects, the love of country, and even of abstract things such as glory, honor, fidelity, excellence, and the like. What is meant in all such instances is a matter of common experience; but when we stop to ask what experience it is that is common to the instances, we are asking for the general idea which covers them all. Here we pass from the concrete to the abstract, from love as experience to general ideas about love, ideas which may refer to any and all instances, but to no one exclusively or in particular. In other words, we lose the essence of love in thought about it. Swedenborg points to this when he says that we do not know what love is, because when we begin to think about it we find that we can form no idea of its proper nature. For the further understanding of the nature of love he asks us to perform a characteristic experiment. It is, to suppose the absence of all affection, and then consider whether you can think anything or do anything. We find that thought, speech, and action cease when affection dies out; they start into activity when affection kindles. The conclusion is, that without affection there is no thought, and no action; and further, that affection, thought, and act belong together, and together they constitute the whole body of man's life. The experiment has a further wide-reaching significance. It is a matter of experience and observation that love comes to consciousness and expresses itself as various affections. These affections are states or qualities of love, in which the love for any particular object or class of objects manifests itself. Filial or parental love, for example, expresses itself in numberless affections, thoughts, and acts; and these taken together make up the filial or parental life. The same may be said of the love of husband and wife, or the love of friends. In general, a man's love with its affections, thoughts, and acts, is his life.

But we reflect that action alone is not properly life, although

it may be associated with life as its operation or effect. Machines act, and some of them wonderfully, as clocks, automobiles, telephones; but we do not think of them as having life. Life is more than and other than action. It is true that a recent school of psychologists undertakes to reduce all human and animal behavior to pure reflex action; but the functions of the reflex-arc are accompanied by sensations, by pleasure and pain, by color, sound, smell, and taste, not to mention touch and muscle sensations. These sensations are facts of a different order from those of mere physiological reflexes, and cannot be properly described in terms of such reflexes. The fate and failure of Thomas Hobbes should have been a sufficient warning of the fruitlessness and inconsistency of all such attempts. Life, therefore, in the proper sense lies back of action, and is the source of action. This could be illustrated endlessly. In animal behavior, sensation and action usually go together, but both depend upon a type of experience which is different from either; they depend upon what we call desire, want, impulse, striving, effort, purpose, volition. These may be what we call instinctive, and may involve, in the lower forms, little or no objective reference, or conscious direction; but in man they involve meditation, deliberation, choice, and so conscious motive, purpose, and volition. In other words, action with man involves reflective thinking and the ordering of ideas, as well as directed foresight. But thought again is not identical with the real springs of life, for thought depends upon and presupposes desire, want, seeking, motive,—some quality or kind of affection; and it is the outcome of such affection. It is in this region of experience that we look for life at its source. Life is the working of desire, the movement of affection; thought and action follow from it. This prepares the way for the first answer to our question. For desire, want, impulse, seeking, striving, effort, etc., constitute a body of affections which spring from love, and are love in its multiform qualities; and these as we have just shown are what we mean by life in the proper and original sense. We have then our answer: Love is the life of man.

This is the first step in getting a knowledge of love as a universal fact or function of the world, and it is the step which leads us to the knowledge of what life really is. In Swedenborg's terse language:

> No one knows what the life of man is unless he knows that it is love. If this is not known, some may believe that man's life consists merely in sensation and action, others that it consists in thinking; when yet thought is the first effect of life, and sensation and action are the second effect of life. Thought is here said to be the first effect of life, yet there is thought which is more and more interior, and thought which is more and more exterior. It is inmost thought, which is the perception of ends, that is actually the first effect of life. (Divine Love and Wisdom, n. 2.)

We should note this as a passage of deep and wide significance; and we may note by the way that it is a sweeping glance at history, and a summary criticism of traditional theory. The sensationalists and materialists have held that life is sensation and action, while the intellectualists have held that life is thought. Swedenborg's statement amounts to the criticism that they have mistaken the instrumental for the principal cause. In other words, thought and action are means by which love seeks and attains its ends.

There is another approach to our answer, which is more concrete and even more far-reaching. The full meaning and nature of love is best indicated by the experience of the young man and young woman who fall truly in love with each other. Love with them is feeling, sentiment, emotion, joy, sympathy, idealizing fancy, desire to please, attitude, purpose, longing, tenderness, satisfaction, peace, happiness, and numberless other qualities of experience. Love is the complex of these qualities; it is warmth of affection with fitting thought, speech, and action. Out of this love grows the love of husband and wife, which adds the quality of regular and constant mutual service, and intimate union and co-operation. Marriage love is eternal, ever more tender, more intimate, and more complete. It is enriched and extended by parental love, in which the quality of otherness is enlarged, and its exercise promoted. Family love is extended to take in other families, and so the love of neigh-

bors and of the community comes into exercise. With the growth of neighborly love comes the love of country and of all countries and of mankind. In this ever-enlarging love, feeling, sentiment, interest, the desire for the welfare of others, and devotion to the good of others, are constant factors.

We see in this that the true nature of love is to be the love of others. The love of others involves thought of others; for it is by thought that love presents to itself its object, and it is by thought that love selects the object that corresponds to its desire and want. To put it otherwise, thought is the thought of love; it is love that thinks, for it sees the relations between its changing states or affections. It is a common saying that love is blind, but this only means that it is blind only to what it does not choose to see; it sees very directly and clearly what it wants to see. Indeed, it is the deepest truth that love is wise. By means of thought also love acts in the fulfilment of its purposes. Just as all thought is the thought of love, so all action is the action of love. Love, thought, and act are, as Swedenborg says, "a distinct one"; they belong together; they do not exist separately. This is true pre-eminently of man, but it is true generally. Sad to say these three in man are not always perfectly and appropriately developed; nevertheless there is always some love however vague behind every thought, and some thought however obscure back of every action. Even in habitual, or mere reflex, acts there is the thought which established the mode of acting in the first place. The love of others, therefore, is an exceedingly complicated process, and involves the whole body of human life, emotional, sentimental, intellectual, and practical. Perhaps there never was so large and varied an opportunity to develop and exercise the love of others as the world now offers. In the field of international politics, we have the League of Nations; in the field of morals and social welfare, we have the world-wide movement for prohibiting the manufacture, transportation, and sale of alcoholic beverages, also for restricting the drug traffic; in the field of commerce and intercommunication, we have steamships and steam railways, flying machines and automobiles,

telegraphy with wires and without them, and telephones; not to speak of countless other marvelous inventions. All these are instruments for the most various and extensive exercise of the love of others. It is love that has put all these things into operation, and which keeps them tirelessly busy.

A book was written some years back which described love as the greatest thing in the world; it caught the enthusiastic attention and welcome of the entire reading public. But love is more than "The Greatest Thing in the World," using world in the restricted sense. It is the greatest thing in the universe. Human love at its best would transform the world into a paradise on earth, as it has transformed human nature throughout the ages, and has wrought the flowering of the human spirit in the topmost reaches of history. But human love is not always at its best either in the man or in the race. Love in the glorious exercise of its freedom may lift human achievement to the highest levels of thought and deed; but it may also exercise an ignoble freedom. Love is, as we have said, always the love of others; but the love of others may be for its own sake, or it may be for the sake of others; love may feel its own joy in others, or it may feel the joy of others as its own. In the one case, the joy does not pass from self; in the other, it has its being in what is not self. No one has comprehended the nature of love more deeply or more fully than Swedenborg. His analysis of selfish and unselfish love is unmatched in the history of thought. On this point we must quote "Divine Love and Wisdom" (n. 47). He has just been saying that the proper nature of love is to love others, and that the essence of love is conjunction, and that this conjuncion is effected by reciprocal love. Then he goes on:

> Love consists in this, that one's own be another's; and to feel another's joy as joy in one's self, is really to love, but to feel one's own joy in another, and not his joy in one's self, is not to love; for this is to love self, but the other is to love the neighbor. These two kinds of love are diametrically opposed to each other.

He adds that they both conjoin, but that self-love changes to hate. It changes to hate when the other ceases or refuses to

be subservient. This criterion is the final test of genuine love, and it lays bare the essence and the depths of self-love. This test is of the greatest value both in personal and in social life. We get from it the difference between use and abuse, between the genuine love for the social welfare, and making the general welfare serve us; the difference between service and exploitation. True love of others gives itself to others for their sake; but the love we feel for others may be perverted to some form of self-interest or self-satisfaction. It is this perversion of love that creates evil, and does all the harm in the world. It makes all the advantages and opportunities offered by the world mere occasions for exploitation and self-indulgence, and leads to degradation instead of to moral and spiritual elevation.

We see then that love is the life of man, and the life of mankind. We also see that the life of mankind centers in marriage love, and that marriage love extends to family, friends, neighbors, country, and finally to the community of the world. The love that takes in the human race is universal love. We may all be touched with this emotion and sentiment. Some experience the feeling and purpose of this love more than others, some to a very real and lively extent, but no man has a full experience of it. Few of us really love our next neighbors. Nevertheless, the love of men, the whole community of men, is a cherished ideal which appeals to our emotions and sentiments, and which makes the moral and spiritual goal of our fullest human love. We think of this universal love for men as actual and complete in the Lord alone.

It is a constant feature of Christian doctrine that God is love; but in the early days Aristotelianism captured Christian philosophy, and fastened upon the Church the doctrine that God is wisdom. This relegates love to the region of sentiment; and today for our psychology and religion love is sentiment (a sentiment which is glorified in idea), not real life. Swedenborg's doctrine of love made a new era in philosophy and in religion. True, it leaves love in the region of sentiment, but extends and universalizes it to take in the whole body of

purposeful effort and all the motive forces of existence, so that instead of being merely a psychological character, a feature of psychological experience, it becomes a metaphysical principle of the highest value and of universal scope. If we study with close and systematic attention the facts and processes of nature and of spirit, we find that love with its wisdom is everywhere present and everywhere potent. It is obvious in moral, intellectual, and spiritual life; it is no less obvious in civil and industrial life; it is observable in animal and plant life as the force which directs and controls the processes and functions of the organisms. To a less degree and with more difficulty, it is observable in the structure and functions of the inanimate world; in crystallization, for example, and in rock formation, in the order and movement of the stars. In all these cases order presupposes plan, and plan presupposes thought, and thought as we have seen presupposes love. In this view, love is the universal principle of existence. It is not only feeling and emotion; it is striving, purpose, plan, action. It is the prime source and agent of all action and motion. To sum up all the characters of love which we know and experience is to sum up all the operations of nature and of life. The active essence of love is the creative impulse, the impulse to give itself to others, which is what brings the others into existence. The fact of the existent created universe, implies that there is really and actually the love which has this universe as a whole and everything in it as its object. Universal Love with its Wisdom and Power implies Infinite Love, for it is the creative affection of Infinite Love, the Lord God of heaven and earth. The Lord is Infinite Love not merely because He is exhaustless Love but also because His Love contains an infinity of states. Infinite Love is the center of the universe, and the source of all the general and particular states of love which constitute the works of creation. The fact that Infinite Love is at the center of the universe, the source and support of it all, gives certain ground for unbounded confidence in the beneficent order of things.

This interpretation of life and the world gives us a new

metaphysics, as well as a new ethics and a new religion. Among the possible states of Infinite Love is the universal love which has for its object the creation and maintenance of this particular finite universe with which we have some acquaintance. This universal love to be real and actual must generate and include less and less general loves of the various degrees and kinds of existence; love of the system of the stars, the solar systems and the planets, the earth and its three kingdoms, and lastly (last perhaps in time but first in end) man, the crown and glory of it all. The universal love of men involves the love of all else as means. This universal love of men, containing within itself all other loves as means, is the Lord; the Creator, Redeemer, and Savior of men. The Lord as Love gives Himself to men in their creation, redemption, and salvation. Man exercises his highest capacity and function in receiving and transmitting this love; it is when rightly received the love of others. In desiring to receive this love, and in looking to the Lord for it, we do actually love the Lord. In receiving this love as He gives it, and in transmitting to others, we exercise the Lord's love of others through us; and this is to love the neighbor, in particular and in the largest sense. This means that the Lord loves all through each, and each through all. This is what makes mankind one in love before the Lord, and from the Lord.

What the world needs is to realize this doctrine, and to accomplish this fact. The only positive hindrance to such accomplishment is man's proneness and habit to pervert the love he receives, changing it in its course from the love of others to the love of selfish objects. It seems that self-love grows, and the forms of selfishness multiply, as human life expands, and the opportunities for the exercise of the love of others are more abundant. Civilizations throughout history have crumbled under the demand of self-indulgence. Under the influence of the love of objective accomplishment, in art, in literature, in social and civil life, the human spirit has flowered. At the present day, opportunities for unselfish achievement or self-indulgence are immensely provided or offered.

The fate of our civilization depends upon the use or abuse of the opportunities presented. Use or abuse are the keys to success or failure. The one opens the way for the inflow of life and love; the other destroys both life and love.

Love has another quality besides creative essence; it has the quality of mercy. The Lord created man for good and happy life; by the abuse of his freedom and his opportunities man fell from grace into evil and sin. Under these conditions the Lord's love was exercised as mercy, which provided all possible and appropriate means for man's redemption, salvation, and final blessedness. This was the act of Divine Justice; for having given him freedom, He must provide for the abuse of that freedom. Love in mercy is sympathy and helpfulness.

Love then is human life, the life of mankind, the Divine Life,—in Swedenborg's terms, Life Itself. From Divine Love all other love is derived by creation and by degrees. Love with all its wisdom and its power is active in the service of man, and in all the world outside of man for his sake. If we lived in love and from love truly, we would have all the light, the wisdom, the power, the strength we could use; we would have all confidence, all hope, all blessedness, and peace.

Lewis F. Hite.

# BIBLICAL AND DOCTRINAL STUDIES

## THE HEALING GARMENT OF THE LORD

The incident of the healing of the woman who came behind the Lord in the press and touched the hem of His garment (Matthew ix. 20-22), emphasizes the sphere of life-giving power flowing forth from Him; it radiated from His presence, from His hand, from His word, even from His garment's hem.

The Lord's garment is typical of all His outward life, of His words and acts, which gave expression to His love. We recognize the figure in the Psalm: "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard: that went down to the skirts of his garments." The Psalm is beautifully descriptive of a life anointed inmostly with holy love, and of this love flowing forth into all the outward things of life. This thought is present in all that is said in Scripture of the garments made for Aaron. Especially we see it in the instruction given for the boarder of the robe: "a golden bell and a pomegranate, a golden bell and a pomegranate, upon the hem of the robe round about,"—a beautiful picture of the music and the fruitfulness of a consecrated life, especially of our Lord's own life, as He moved in and out in His ministries among men. We recognize the figure in the command to Israel, to put on the border of their robes the ribbon of blue or purple. It is the duty of bringing the love and truth of heaven down into the words and deeds of common life. The exaggeration of external forms, the Lord condemned in the Pharisees, when He rebuked them for making broad the borders of their garments. But the ribbon of blue He requires.

With the same spiritual thought we read of Joseph's coat "of many colors," a type of a beautiful life, especially of the

Lord's life, varied in its expression of truth and love, adapted to the states of all with whom He came in contact. The spiritual thought is not very different, if we understand the language to mean a long garment, extending to the wrists and to the ankles, like the "garment down to the foot" in which the Lord appeared to John in *Revelation,* picturing the reaching out and down of His influence into the outmost things of life.

Studying the meaning of garments more closely, the first clothing of love, which is one's real life, is thought, and thought is then clothed in words and acts. The Lord's garments are His thoughts and words, living and throbbing with Divine life within, imparting to others life and power. "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life." "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life." The swaddling clothes of the infant Lord suggest the simplest, most childlike expression of His truth. The garments in which He was seen clothed on the Mount of Transfiguration, "white and glistering, so as no fuller on earth can whiten them," are a vision of the Lord's truth as it is known to angels. The dividing of the Lord's garments at the cross pictured the hostility of those who sought to rend His words. But there was the inner garment, woven without seam, the inner wisdom, heavenly and Divine, which evil men could not reach.

This thought of the Lord's truth, of His Word, as His garment, helps us to bring the scene and promise of *Matthew* ix. 20-22, down to ourselves. The Lord's Word is with us in written form. To us this is His healing garment. It seems a lifeless thing, woven of earthly materials, but it lives with His presence. It has its hem, the letter of the Word, and even this hem is full of power. The power of the Lord's Word is real to us from experience. We may use it as the Lord used it in times of temptation, answering the tempter, "It is written, thou shalt not." There is power in it which the tempter cannot withstand. We are taught that in its letter the Word is in its fulness and its power. In the other world, those who are in power from the letter of the Word can overcome hosts of the

evil with all their arts, simply by a look and an effort of the will. Not only do we find in the Lord's Word protection against evil; we find there comfort in times of trial, and strength to do the duty that is before us.

And that charming passage in the story of the woman who touched the garment's hem, which tells of the Lord's sensitiveness to our touch, His consciousness of our need and His loving answer! "Who touched me?" the Lord asked, "somebody hath touched me; for I perceive that virtue has gone out of me." The multitude were thronging Him, but one touch He felt unlike the rest. Among all the calls that go forth to the Lord in prayer, the Lord perceives each humble and sincere appeal, however timid, in the rush and pressure of life, and His love comes in return. It is the same with His Word. Many of those who read are like the throng who thoughtlessly or rudely press upon Him, some may even rend His garments; but where one humbly, like the woman, desiring help, reaches forth a timid hand to touch His garment's hem, He feels it and He gives His help. When we find time in the crowded day to read His Word, when, though our hands are busy, we bring to mind His words and repeat them for our help, He feels our touch and gives it lovingly.

This experience of the highway, of the garment's hem, is for us all, and it leads on to deeper experiences pictured in the raising of the little girl to life, which follows the healing of the woman. This experience of the street is the wholesome ordering of our outward life by the Lord's Word, its cleansing and protection, and the receiving of new vigor, which is here and now within our reach. Beyond are deeper possibilities of spiritual quickening, of service and of joy, which we hardly dare to hope for.

In many parts of Scripture we read of the power of the Divine Word as the activity and expression of the Divine love. There is its power in creating: "By the word of the Lord were the heavens made, and all the hosts of them, by the breath of his mouth." There is its power in redeeming. The Word by which all things were made became flesh and dwelt among

us. The power of the Lord's Word is shown in the power attending the ark in which were the Commandments, written upon tables of stone; the power which divided Jordan, and threw down the walls of Jericho.

In the *Psalms* are many lessons of the preciousness of the Lord's Word. In the first Psalm a man is described as a flourishing and fruitful tree. "His delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night." From the Lord's law he draws life, as a tree from a refreshing stream.

Of the Lord's judgments the Psalmist says, "More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb." And Jeremiah, in the same strain: "Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart."

The long Psalm is in praise of the Lord's Word, and its power in all life's changing states. "Blessed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the Lord." "Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy word." "The law of thy mouth is better unto me than thousands of gold and silver." "O how I love thy law! it is my meditation all the day. Thou through thy commandments hast made me wiser than mine enemies: for they are ever with me. I have more understanding than all my teachers: for thy testimonies are my meditation. I understand more than the ancients, because I keep thy precepts." "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." "Thy testimonies are wonderful: therefore doth my soul keep them. The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple." These passages go so far beyond our experience in their estimate of the Lord's Word, that we hardly know how to understand them. In fulness they are true only of the Lord; yet they describe experiences, realizations of power and blessing from the Word which should be true, and increasingly true, for us.

Again, in the Scriptures the Lord's Word is likened to the

radiance of the sun "going forth from the end of the heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it." The Psalm turns abruptly from this picture: "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple."

The Lord's Word is pictured as the rain coming down, and the snow from heaven, which "returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater: so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it."

The Lord's Word is pictured as wells of water springing up into everlasting life, "as the waters which cover the seas, for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord." The Lord's Word is seed which the Divine Sower sows, to fill the earth with beauty and fruitfulness.

One is seen in the *Revelation,* riding on a white horse, going forth conquering and to conquer, leading the armies of heaven on white horses; and his name is called the Word of God.

As we awake to the real character of the Word, we know that a wonderful opportunity awaits us, which we have not half, no, not a hundredth part, appreciated or used. The possibility of life from the Lord's Word is set before us and kept before us in visions and glowing passages of Scripture, but nowhere more vividly or touchingly than in the Gospel picture of the healing garment of the Lord. "As many as touched were made perfectly whole" (Matthew xiv. 36).

William L. Worcester.

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## THE SECOND COMING

In a few words (Mark xiii. 26) the Lord not only assured the disciples that He would come again to the world, but told them the manner of His coming. He would come in the clouds with great power and glory after a cosmic disturbance in which the sun would be darkened, the moon fail to give her

light, the stars of heaven fall, and the powers in heaven be shaken. There has been difficulty with the Lord's prediction, due to the indefinite time set by Him for the event to occur. All the Lord says about the time of the coming is: "Of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father."

However, along with the prediction of the epochal Second Coming to the world, the Lord was telling the disciples about the destruction of Jerusalem; and, as He spoke on two topics in the same discourse, it was easy for the disciples to entangle the two topics and to confuse prediction of the Second Coming with that of the destruction of Jerusalem. Speaking of the destruction of Jerusalem, the Lord said: "Verily, I say unto you, that this generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled"—and it must have been the misinterpretation of these words as alluding to the topic of the Second Coming that led the disciples to believe that the Lord would come within their life-time.

This is why the first preaching of the Gospel, after the ascension, by the disciples and apostles was centered about the hope of an immediate, physical return of the Lord to earth (I Thessalonians xiv. 16); but as the events predicted failed to materialize, the hope and preaching of the early Christians turned to other channels.

Succeeding generations of Christians have failed to see the prediction literally fulfilled, and every once in a while some theory of interpretation has been launched to explain the Second Coming. These interpretations place the Second Coming all the way from Pentecost to the end of the world; and a few are of the opinion that the coming predicted by the Lord is not a physical coming but a spiritual coming to the individual. The former base their interpretations on the teaching of the synoptic Gospels and the Book of *Revelation,* while the latter base their interpretation more on the teaching of the Gospel of *John,* which is obviously the most inward and spiritual record of the Lord's life and teaching.

Finding so many interpretations of the Second Coming pre-

vailing in Christendom, it is best for us to study the subject, and see for ourselves what the Second Coming is to be, and when to expect it; then we shall be better prepared to choose a consistent interpretation that is found to agree with the Scripture prediction.

The allusion to the darkening of the sun, the failing of the moon to give her light, the stars falling, and the powers in heaven being shaken, should remind us of similar passages of Scripture in the Old Testament; and, if we discover the aptness of the Old Testament passages in their context, perhaps the same general thought will be true of the New Testament passages.

When the prophet Isaiah said "Behold the day of the Lord cometh, cruel both with wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate: and He shall destroy the sinners therefore out of it. For the stars of heaven and the constellations thereof shall not give their light: the sun shall be darkened in his going forth, and the moon shall not cause her light to shine" (viii. 9,10) was he speaking of a physical coming of the Lord? No, he was telling of Divine judgment on Babylon, and picturing the destruction of Babylon.

In like manner the prophet Ezekiel speaks of Divine judgment falling on Egypt:

> When I shall extinguish thee, I will cover the heaven, and make the stars thereof dark; I will cover the sun with a cloud, and the moon shall not give her light. All the bright lights of heaven will I make dark over thee, and set darkness upon the land, saith the Lord. (Ezekiel xxxii. 7, 8.)

Similar words are used by the prophet Amos (viii. 9) to depict the downfall of the kingdom of Israel; and the prophet Isaiah again uses the symbolic terms regarding the overthrow of Edom (xxxiv. 4).

We see, then, that cosmic disturbances were used in the Old Testament prophecies to symbolize judgment; and there is no reason why we may not carry this idea over into the New Testament teaching in *Mark* xiii, and say that the Second Com-

ing is preceded by a judgment which prepares the way for the Lord in His Second Coming.

Following the judgment, "then shall they see the Son of man coming in the clouds with great power and glory." The scriptural usage of "clouds" will help us to see the manner of the Lord's coming, for there are many scriptural passages relating to the Lord's visitations to humanity by means of clouds. The Lord guided the children of Israel out of Egypt by means of a cloud, which gave light to the Israelites, but appeared as a dark partition before the Egyptians, so that they were unable to see the fleeing children of Israel.

Later in the Exodus story the Lord appeared to Moses on Mt. Sinai in a cloud; and it was there that the Ten Commandments were given to the children of Israel.

After completing the Temple at Jerusalem, King Solomon had the ark brought into the Temple and placed in the oracle; and when the priests came out of the holy place "the cloud filled the house of the Lord, so that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud; for the glory of the Lord had filled the house of the Lord" (I Kings viii. 10-11).

Also, after the Exile, Daniel "saw in the night visions."

> And behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, . . . and there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him; his kingdom is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed (Daniel vii. 13-14).

The Lord appeared to the Israelites by means of a cloud in each great historical event of their race—from the going out of Egypt to the Exile; and these appearances in a cloud were for the purpose of protecting, instructing, rewarding, and assuring the Israelites that the Lord was watching over his chosen people. Although the cloud in each instance was employed as a veil that screened the Divine from human eyes, nevertheless each visitation to Israel gave them further understanding of His wishes and care.

Clouds, then, are associated with Divine visitation and Divine revelation in passages of the Old Testament. We find the same

is true of the New Testament passages where clouds are used. It was at the Transfiguration that a bright cloud overshadowed the group, and a voice out of the cloud said, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him" (Matthew xvii. 5).

In the introductory chapter of the Book of *Revelation,* John says: "Behold He cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him" (Revelation i. 7). Then follows the moving, pictorial review of the Lord's kingdom on earth and in heaven, in which every eye may see the Lord, and every heart long for the ideal kingdom of the Lord upon earth as portrayed in the Holy City, New Jerusalem.

The last, but a very important New Testament passage, which we shall bring to bear on the interpretation of "clouds" is the sixty-fourth verse of the twenty-fourth chapter of *Matthew.* The Lord, at His trial before the High-Priest, said to the High-Priest: "Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven." We cannot help but feel that these words were fulfilled in the spreading of Christianity by means of the Gospel preached and later written; and that the High-Priest lived long enough to feel the power and influence of the Son of man coming in that way.

Therefore, in both Old and New Testaments, the clouds are used to picture visitation and revelation of the Lord to mankind by means of instruction in his Divine Truth. If we wish to find the Lord to-day, we may find him in his Divine Truth as revealed to us in Scripture; for it is there amid the large amount of history, narrative, and symbolism which veils and screens the Lord from the sight of finite beings, that the Lord is to be found as Divine Truth which gives instruction to men so that they may be led by the truth to their Lord and Savior.

Although the Lord has always been present to mankind in the power of His Divine Truth, nevertheless, in His Second Coming, He promises to come not only with power but with glory. There is something to be added in the Second Coming that has not been experienced by man before, which in

some manner will make it more glorious than any preceding visitation of the Lord to mankind.

Still, the Lord uses the former revelations of Himself to build upon. At His first coming in the flesh, He revealed some of the hidden meaning of the Old Testament, and added new truth in the New Testament. So too, in His Second Coming, we may expect Him to shed light on the dark and beclouded passages of Scripture which have kept men from seeing Him in His true nature and true relationship to them.

So far, in our study of the scriptural passages on the Second Coming, we have found that the coming is to be preceded by a judgment, and is to be followed by a further revelation of the Lord to men in the Scripture. But before leaving the manner of His coming we must note that all revelation in the Scripture has been given through human agents, such as the patriarchs, the prophets, and the disciples, who wrote their revelations under Divine guidance. That the Second Coming, as a new revelation of the Lord in Scripture, will be of like manner is to be presumed in the Light of past revelations.

Having arrived at some conclusions as to the manner of the Lord's Second Coming, we have to consider the question of approximate time of His coming. The time element is left indefinite in Scripture and to the Lord Himself to reveal. However, if we seek to set a date for His coming, we must first find a revelation that meets all the requirements of the Divine prediction; that is, a revelation employing a human agent who not only bears the seal of Divine approval on his work but heralds a judgment and gives a consistent and rational explanation of how the Lord accomplishes His coming in the Scripture with great power and glory.

Such a revelation, I believe, is to be found in the theological writings of Emanuel Swedenborg, who calls himself the servant of the Lord Jesus Christ and speaks of his work as follows:

> Since the Lord cannot manifest Himself in Person, . . . and nevertheless has foretold that He was to come and establish a new church, which is the New Jerusalem, it follows that He will do this by means of a man, who is able not only to receive these doctrines in his understanding but also to publish them by the press. That the Lord mani-

fested Himself before me, His servant, and sent me to this office, that He afterwards opened the eyes of my spirit and thus introduced me into the spiritual world and granted me to see the heavens and the hells, and to talk with angels and spirits, and this now continuously for several years, I affirm in truth; as also that from the first day of that call I have not received anything whatever pertaining to the doctrines of that church from any angel, but from the Lord alone while I have read the word. (True Christian Religion, n. 776.)

These words were written in the year 1771, after Swedenborg had published the major part of his writings and had been for over twenty-five years in such a relationship to the Lord and the spiritual world as he describes. Swedenborg also gives a graphic account of a judgment that took place in the spiritual world, coming to a climax in the year 1757, and relates it to the scriptural prediction of the Lord's Second Coming. This judgment was necessary to prepare the heavens for receiving and teaching the new revelation that came with the Second Coming.

If the testimony of Swedenborg is to be relied upon, we may say that the Lord made his Second Coming in the middle of the Eighteenth Century; for it was from that time on that the Lord revealed Himself to Swedenborg, and permitted him to record his other world experiences, and to explain soome of the spiritual sense of Scripture.

The spiritual exposition of Scripture by means of the application of the law of correspondence existing between the spiritual and natural worlds is an outstanding feature of the Second Coming; and as we study and apply the principles of spiritual interpretation as revealed to Swedenborg to the Scripture, we may see how the Lord's true nature and our relationship to Him is to be found hidden in the clouds from *Genesis* to *Revelation.*

Under Divine guidance and as a fulfillment of the coming of the Son of man in the clouds with great power and glory, Swedenborg devotes most of his mission to the setting forth of the spiritual sense in Scripture, giving minute exposition of *Genesis, Exodus,* and *Revelation* in the spiritual sense, together

with various other Scripture passages brought in as confirming or explanatory passages.

Each scriptural study in the spiritual sense gave Swedenborg an insight into doctrinal subjects; and doctrinal books usually followed each scriptural study. Because Swedenborg bases both his spiritual exposition and doctrinal teaching on the Scripture, his mission fulfills the prediction of the coming of the Son of man in Scripture.

Throughout the revelations given Swedenborg, the Lord's power and glory are displayed as never before; and the teaching running throughout Swedenborg's writing is that the glory of the Lord will be reflected upon earth in the ideal new Christian community, the Holy City, New Jerusalem, as men live a life according to the Lord's revelation of Himself in His Second Coming.

Let us conclude our study of the Second Coming with these few thoughts: That although Swedenborg was the herald of the Lord's Second Coming, and gave to the world a fuller concept of the Lord, the spiritual world, Scripture, and life, the Second Coming is not completed until the individual life is regenerated under the influence of the new revelation, and the Holy City, New Jerusalem, dwells upon earth as in heaven; and that the Lord is constantly striving to have this new Christian community a reality, and employs the angels and all the influences of the spiritual world to bring about the new life. His coming, while it may be said to consist in this new revelation, is after all realized in individuals only as they live the spiritual life; and that life, as always, is to be found in the Lord's revelation to men in the Scripture, but now, in the days of his Second Coming, the former pitfalls of faith and life are exposed, giving better opportunity for the growth of the spiritual life both in the individual and the community.

He has come in the clouds with great power and glory. "Even so come, Lord Jesus," to the hearts and minds of all men.

DONALD C. GUSTAFSON.

# CURRENT LITERATURE

## THE MYSTERY RELIGIONS AND CHRISTIANITY

The average person is prone to think that Christianity came into the world and found a clear field for its doctrines of a Redeemer-God who gave salvation and a blessed life after death to those who believed in him. In point of fact, however, Christianity had serious rivals in what are known as the Mystery Religions, each proclaiming a Redeemer-God of its own, and promising, each in its own way, a blessed future life. Over them Christianity triumphed; and the New-Churchman who cannot help seeing in the world around him much that resembles his own teaching, so that the very reasons for the existence of his Church seem to be challenged, may find in this account of its triumph not only encouragement, but assistance in seeing the distinctive contribution he has to make to the religious life of men.

"Mystery-Religions and Christianity,"* by Samuel Angus, begins with a survey of conditions in the Græco-Roman world in which these religions lived and grew. This survey covers four heads: The Bankruptcy of Greek Religion, and the disintegrating influence of Greek philosophy; Alexander the Great; The Appearance of the Jews in World History; and The Romans in Contact with the East.

The second chapter proceeds to the question, What is a Mystery Religion? It finds them marked by seven characteristics:

I. A Mystery Religion was a religion of symbolism which, through myth and allegory, iconic representations, blazing lights and dense darkness, liturgies and sacramental acts and suggestions, quickened the intu-

**Mystery-Religions and Christianity;* a study in the religious background of early Christianity. By Samuel Angus. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1925. 373 pp., 8vo. $3.50.

itions of the heart, and provoked in the initiate a mystical experience conducing to *palingenesia* (regeneration), the object of every initiation.

II. It was a religion of Redemption which professed to remove estrangement between man and God, to procure forgiveness of sins, to furnish mediation. Means of purification and formulæ of access to God, and acclamations of confidence and victory, were part of the apparatus of every Mystery.

III. They were systems of *Gnosis* akin, and forming a stage to those movements to which the name Gnosticism is attached. They professed to satisfy the desire for knowledge of God which became pronounced from at least the second century B. C., and increased in intensity until the acme of syncretism in the third and fourth centuries of our era. The Mysteries brought men into contact with the God "who wishes to be known, and is known to His own".

IV. A Mystery Religion was a Sacramental Drama, which appealed primarily to the emotions, and aimed at producing psychic and mystic effects by which the neophyte might experience the exaltation of a new life.

V. The Mysteries were eschatological religions having to do with the interests and issues of life and death. Their chief charm was that they brought an evangel of life and immortality to confront the mystery of the grave.

VI. A Mystery Religion was a personal religion to which membership was open not by the accident of birth but by a religious rebirth.

VII. A Mystery Religion, as a personal religion, presents another side, which is a necessary complement of an individualistic religion; that is, it takes on the character of a cosmic religion. . . . This cosmic interest rested on the true instinct that religion must put man right with the totality of things by removing desolating antitheses.

The most important of these religions were the Greek Eleusinia, the cults of the Capodocian Mên, the Phrygian Sabazios and the Great Mother, the Egyptian Isis and Serapis, and the Samothracian Cabiri, the *Dea Syria* and her satellites, the Persian Mithra. They present immense varieties of detail and emphasis. Nevertheless the religious life of a devotee of any one of them may be analyzed into the same three main stages: Preparation and Probation; Initiation and Communion; Blessedness and Salvation. The preparation included vows of secrecy, confession, purificatory washings, sacrifices, ascetic preparations, pilgrimages, self-mortifications and mutilations, and various other less important rites. The ceremonies of initiation varied with the various religions, and of the de-

tails we know next to nothing, because of the strictness with which the vows of secrecy were kept. But we do know that they appealed to the eye, the imagination, and the emotions, the purpose being to induce the initiand through hallucination, hypnotism or suggestion to an experience of identification with deity. This ecstatic experience was believed to be productive of regeneration, communion and even union with the Mystery deity.

> [This salvation] embraced deliverance from the physical ills of life, from bodily ailments, from the sense of alienation, from the galling power of Fate, and the reckless caprice of fortune, from the ubiquitous terrors of the demons, from the fears of superstition, and lastly from the gloom of death. No other forms of pagan religion could enter into competition with the Mysteries in such a comprehensive evangel. (P. 138.)

These religions had a wide following and appeal in the several centuries immediately preceding and following the beginning of the Christian era. In the first place conditions favored their spread. The Orphic movement had prepared the mind of the West for these Oriental religions by setting up the idea of holiness as a matter of individual achievement to be reached by *askesis*, instead of the prevailing Greek idea of happiness to be attained by self-expression. With the collapse of the city-state system came the collapse of the religion of which it was the expression; and men were cast adrift to find new religious moorings. The unification of mankind inaugurated by Alexander and consummated by the Romans made for universalism and free interchange of thought. The penetration of the Orient had set the fashion for Oriental things. In this age, too, there was a growing influence of the populace whose tastes must be catered to, even in religion. The Mysteries allied themselves with astrology and magic, and these in turn prepared the way for the Mysteries. An eschatological interest aroused by the resurgence of the Minoan-Mycenaean chthonian theology, was extremely hospitable to the Mystery cults.

But beside these more or less external, favorable conditions, the Mysteries responded to certain definite religious needs of

the age. There was a growing demand that religion make a place for the individual, that it recognize his existence independently of a social group. It was an age, too, when men sought from among various religions what seemed to them best; and to such the strong syncretism of the Mysteries appealed. There was a developing and deep-rooted sense of sin, which finds reflection even in the poetry of Ovid:

> *Sed trahit invitam nova vis, aliudque cupido.*
> *Mens aliud suadet. Video meliora proboque,*
> *Deteriora sequor. (Metam. VII. 18ff.)*

An intense craving for private association is evidenced by the numerous guilds and societies of which we learn from inscriptions, and by the constant and always unsuccessful effort of the government to stamp them out. A natural reaction to the excesses to which the creed *naturalia non sunt turpia* conduced, led to extremes of asceticism. Seneca's *ad salutem spectat* was characteristic of a deeply felt need for salvation. Finally, the Mysteries could meet the wide-spread craving for immortality with the promise that the Mystery Gods gave such a life to their followers.

And yet, despite this wide appeal and the persistence of the Mysteries through many centuries, they had in common fundamental defects which eventually caused their death. "They won their conquests partly by material and partly by spiritual weapons. They too often catered to, rather than countered, vulgar tastes. Elements of a dangerous character to unspiritual minds were imbedded in their ritual." Among the chief defects were these: They were freighted with the myths of a primitive naturalism. They linked themselves with magic and astrology, which undermined their spirituality. Again, they went to extremes, overemphasizing the individual, mystic, personal type of religion. Finally they were vague, and weak theologically, allowing men to find in them almost anything they sought for, and yet being unable to withstand the play of critical thought.

These defects paved the way for the victory of Christianity. But that victory is not to be ascribed to them, but to certain effective methods of propaganda, and to its inherent merit.

First of all there was its intolerance.

Tolerance too often results from indifference or indecision, but the intolerance of the Christian preachers was that of the conviction that they had found *the* all-comprehensive truth. And in the welter of religions and philosophies intolerance was the most obvious, if not the only sure method of preservation. . . . Christianity would not stoop to conquer. It made claims of seemingly the most extravagant order, from which it would not abate one jot. Its exclusiveness preserved its integrity. It alone had the courage to be exclusive.

Second, Christianity was the only genuinely universal religion.

No other religion could compete with Christianity in the scope and variety of its appeal and the comprehensiveness of its message. It admitted of diverse interpretation adapting it to every variety of temperament and racial outlook. It could be presented legally or mystically, in the homely terms of the Sermon on the Mount or in the subtlety of a metaphysical system. It could baptise into the name of its Lord everything that was of worth in the convert's past paganism or Judaism. Its appeal was at once religious, social, philosophical, and ethical, so that it could satisfy the threefold demands made of a religion—social needs, personal solace, and justification of its dogmas.

In a day which sought for authority and was satisfied to find it in ancient writings, the Church had in the Greek Bible a weapon made ready to its hand.

[Moreover] Christianity brought a satisfying message to the widespread sorrow of the ancient world. The real test of any religion is not its attitude to the joys and raptures of life, but its ability to give moral content to the sorrows and perplexities of life. Christianity stood this test. . . . Christianity gave to suffering a profound religious meaning to life, and, instead of demanding resignation, offered a means of conquest over a world which God loves, and transmuted grief into joy.

Again there was the comprehensive quality of its faith.

The thing that Christians called faith embraced the noetic quality of conviction, or belief, the moral quality of steadfastness, or loyalty, and the religious quality of absolute trust in a person. . . . It was only in Christianity that faith as a religious principle came to its full fruition. Christian faith embraced every element of prior religious experience and aspiration; while it exalted man above his earthliness, it did justice to all the interests and relations of earthly life. In its comprehensiveness it was unsurpassed, while in one important aspect it proved unique—faith in an historic person, and in the defiant enthusiasm awakened by

loyalty to that person. The person of Christ was the center of the new faith. . . .

[Finally] Christianity had a unique advantage over all its competitors, including even Judaism, in having an historic Person as a Founder, whose Person was greater than His teachings. Herein lay its greatest originality and the main secret of its power. Christian enthusiasm was awakened and sustained not by an ideal, but by a Person. Christianity was the new spiritual power which entered our humanity from the Personality of one who had been a familiar figure in Palestine. Christian preachers did not require faith merely in Jesus' teachings or in His Resurrection, but in Himself. By a true instinct His followers recognized that the Personality of their Master, which fascinated and perplexed them, which prompted Christologies, which gained their allegiance, was the new factor in history. Other religions might show a more imposing ceremonial, might offer a liturgy more subtle than the Disciples' Prayer or the Apostles' Creed; other religions and philosophies might dispute with considerable success the originality of Jesus' teachings, and furnish parallels to most of them; but no other religion could 'placard' a real being in flesh and blood who had lived so near to God, and brought men into such intimate soul-satisfying union with the Father.

This most inadequate summary of an exceptional book, while it does not at all do justice to the richness of its contents, may nevertheless serve as a guide to them. Although it is a book easy to summarize, any summary will bear much the same relation to the book as the skeleton does to the human body. Neither the copiousness of the author's knowledge of fact, nor the life with which he has managed to endow those facts, can be conveyed by anything less than the book itself. But any one who cares for an understanding of the world into which Christianity came as it really lived and moved, who cares to have the light which a knowledge of conditions in that age of the coming of the Lord can shed on these times when He is coming again, or who simply enjoys a fine piece of historical writing, will find the book well worth reading apart from any specific interest in the Mystery Religions. If he is interested in them, or in the history or philosophy of religion in general, the book is indispensable.

FREDERIC R. CROWNFIELD.

## SYMMETRICAL CHURCHMANSHIP*

The present sketch introduces REVIEW readers to another of the contemporary Anglican prelates who have won distinction as philosophers and scholars. The Rt. Rev. Dr. Temple, son of one Archbishop of Canterbury and son-in-law of another, is now Bishop of Manchester, but is spoken of as the probable successor to the present "Primate of all England." *Ecclesia Anglicana* will be fortunate in such a ruler. Dr. Temple is not only an able administrator, but a thinker of more than usual power and penetration, the author of such important philosophical works as *"Mens Creatrix"* and *"Christus Veritas,"* and the editor of that quarterly organ of the "social gospel," *The Pilgrim.*

All informed persons have some acquaintance with the "schools of thought" in modern Anglicanism which used to be called High, Low, and Broad, but now claim the more exact distinctions of Anglo-Catholic, Evangelical, and Modernist. The "schools of thought" merge into one another, however, particularly among the philosophically minded. Besides those champions who desire an Anglicanism wholly Catholic (in whatever sense they use that much-abused term) or wholly Protestant and "Evangelical," there are those who glory in the diversity of Anglicanism, and prize the union within it of what at first (and perhaps second!) sight appear irreconcilable points of view. There are Catholic Modernists—again in various senses and degrees—and Catholic Evangelists.

Dr. Temple is technically classed as a Catholic Evangelical; and his chapter on "The Place of the Church in the Creed" affords him opportunity for some remarks in behalf of his position. He says:

> Again, at the Reformation, two main strands or tendencies in Christianity—the individual and the corporate, the Evangelical and the Catholic—fell apart, and each has suffered grievously for lack of the other. In the 'Evangelical' Churches the lack of corporate cohesion has led to

**Personal Religion and the Life of Fellowship.* By WM. TEMPLE, BP. OF MANCHESTER. New York: Longmans, Green & Co. 1926. 87 pp. 12 mo. $1.00.

perpetually fresh separations, while in the Roman Catholic Church the lack of stress on the freedom of spiritual life in every individual has led to a most excessive regimentation. The Church of England is peculiar in trying to hold these two together, and for this reason has a very special place in relation to the problem of reunion. In spite of the conspicuous antagonism of extremists, the chief mark of the last twenty years' history in the Church of England is the steady increase of fellowship between the Catholic and the Evangelical schools of thought.

The Bishop thinks that any re-united Church of Christ must retain the apostolical ministry—that is, the historic succession —and the two sacraments which, as the Prayer Book says, were alone "ordained by Christ." But there is room within these limits for great variety and great liberty for taste and temperament.

Dr. Temple's present volume, amazingly brief when one considers how many pregnant thoughts he gathers into it, has as its theme the so-called "social gospel." The "drift" of the later chapters may be gathered from such heads as Discipleship and Politics, Discipleship and Economies, and The Church and the Kingdom of God. There is a very sensible summary of the 1924 C.O.P.E.C. reports, a balanced, rational point of view on the relation between the present non-Christian society of so-called Christian countries and the ideals which Christian philosophy supplies, and by the application of which alone European civilization may hope to endure.

Far more impressive to the reviewer than the "social" doctrine of Dr. Temple,—not particularly fresh, though on that account not a whit the less wholesome or salutary—is the combination in this one man and thinker of all the elements necessary to a "symmetrical" religion. Since Baron von Hügel's "Eternal Life," much has been heard of the necessity for equal emphasis on the mystical, the intellectual, and the institutional elements in religion. Dr. Temple seems, more than almost any other religionist with whom we are acquainted, to appreciate this necessity, and to fulfil it. As scholar and philosopher, ecclesiastic and man of faith and devotion, he approximates the ideal set before us all.

AUSTIN WARREN, PH.D.

## CHRISTIAN HISTORY IN OUTLINE*

After the decidedly inferior "outlines" of all sorts of things which have appeared since Sir J. Arthur Thomson's masterly "Outline of Science," it is refreshing to find another which is worth reading—and study. This set presenting "An Outline of Christianity" is a monumental work in five volumes, each one under the separate editorship of a well-known and, what is more important , really scholarly man, except perhaps in one instance. In that instance the quality of the work and the standing of the individual contributors in large measure atone for any lack of scholarship on the editor's part.

The third volume, however, is edited by Dr. Shailer Matthews, Dean of the Theological School at Chicago University. It deals with "The Rise of the Modern Churches," and continues the story of the development of Christianity, both in its doctrinal and its institutional aspects, from the point at which the story is left by the second volume.

Perhaps there are scholars who would question the propriety of regarding the Protestant Reformation as belonging to strictly modern history,—as Professor Williston Walker, were he living, very probably would do; but this is a rather secondary point. For certainly the period in which the "Modern Churches" arose *did* begin with that movement. It was continued in the various "wars of religion," until first the national churches, and ultimately individuals, gained the right to believe and worship (or not to believe or worship) as they desired.

It is perhaps well for those who call themselves American to review that story of conflict just at this time, when the ultra-conservatives in the churches (even in churches which won their right to exist at all only after years of persecution and bloodshed) are making war upon the teaching of certain scientific views in the public schools as well as in denominational institutions. For the movement to determine what shall be

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**The Rise of the Modern Churches.* SHAILER MATTHEWS, D.D., EDITOR. (An Outline of Christianity: The Story of our Civilization,—Volume Three) New York: Dodd, Mead & Co. xxiv 552 pp., 8vo. $5.00.

taught in public institutions on strictly religious grounds, is but another chapter in the already over-long story of the conflict between authority and liberty in religion. It seems a definite step toward the reunion of church and state, which were only separated after much treasure had been spent, and human blood had been freely shed.

The purpose of this third volume, as given in the Foreword, is not only to portray the differences, but to place "emphasis upon the common elements in the various Christian bodies." It is also meant "to show the result of social and political forces upon religious movements" (factors altogether too often overlooked). In both these endeavors, the writers have been very successful.

The story of the various branches of the Church Universal is dealt with by prominent members of the different bodies, except in the case of the smaller organizations, and the Eastern Churches. Why this happens in the latter instance is a matter of conjecture.

The worth of the varied contributions made by these churches is then summed up in short, separate chapters by Professor Matthews himself, so that the story is in each instance doubly significant. This is especially true in the case of the Anglican Communion, which is told by Percy Dearmer, almost invariably a stimulating writer, and by Dr. Frank Garvin, of the General Theological Seminary, for the American branch of that Communion—the Protestant Episcopal Church.

Roman Catholicism is dealt with, at considerable length, by Fr. Francis Mannhardt, a member of the Society of Jesus. It is an interesting, though not exactly convincing chapter. There is the customary summary by the Editor. The chapter on the Eastern Orthodox Churches is excellent; it is by Dr. Garvin, an Episcopalian, and therefore one in sympathy with the aims and purposes of Eastern Orthodoxy.

Rufus Jones, probably the greatest authority on Mysticism after Baron von Hügel (and perhaps Dean Inge), has a long chapter, entitled "Divergent Religious Bodies." In this he deals not only with his own Fellowship of Friends, but with

several minor bodies and certain mystics, including Unitarianism, Universalism, Swedenborg, and the Swedenborgian churches in Great Britain and America.

Of the two latter, he does not write at any great length, but with unusual breadth and sympathy as might be expected. He says in part:

> An interesting and spiritually significant movement owed its birth to the experiences and teachings of Emanuel Swedenborg (1688-1772). Swedenborg was a universal genius, an extensive traveller, a profound scientist, and the original formulator of the nebular hypothesis . . . He believed that he discovered love as the essence of God's nature, and wisdom as the outer expression of God in the Universe.

Oddly enough, he seems to make Clowes and Hartley responsible for the beginnings of the English Church, though it may be that he only means that their interest and efforts led to the movement's gaining sufficient strength to launch a new body. He writes:

> The New Church . . . . owes its formative stages and its early development to Thomas Hartley and John Clowes . . . . who were profoundly impressed by the life and writings of Swedenborg.

It is admittedly difficult to undersand how he came to write in this way. After speaking of the first church in England and the first in America, he makes this exceedingly complimentary estimate of New-Church people. It rather makes one feel he has a lot to "live up to"!

> The membership, while not large, is composed of devoted, spiritually-minded persons, who endeavor to make their lives organs of the love of God. (Pp. 389-390.)

The final sections are devoted to the stories of Christian Missions and of Present Religious Tendencies. The former is the work of Canon C. H. Robinson, a Secretary of the S. P. G.; the latter, of the Editor himself. There is a good chronology, and a valuable bibliography,—features common to all five volumes. The indexes are excellent.

These volumes are sponsored by so many of the leading clergy of the English-speaking world, that the various lists read like those of a clerical "Who's Who." They are finely

bound, on good paper, with clear, large type and many beautiful illustrations, reproductions of famous paintings, not a few in colors. They are books which are well-nigh essential to the average clergyman who cannot afford a large collection of works on Church History, for they are almost a library in themselves. All concerned with their publication are to be heartily congratulated and sincerely thanked for bringing together so much material in so attractive a format, and in so readable a style.

FRANK H. ANDREW.

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## "WHAT MY RELIGION MEANS TO ME"*

In the *American Magazine* of October, 1925, there appeared as the leading article a popularly written paper by that much esteemed writer of newspaper verse, Edgar A. Guest, in which he told about what his religion means to him. Without giving much of an idea as to what his religious beliefs are, he tells us frankly that he was born and brought up in "the Swedenborgian faith"; that in his earlier years he attended the Swedenborgian Sunday School and Church in Detroit; but that the effective part of his religious training was received from his mother. Having married an Episcopalian, since that event he has attended the Episcopal Church; but he implies that the beliefs instilled into him in childhood are still the ruling principles of his life, and he affirms that out of his religion have come those verses of his that have had the widest appeal.

This article, "What My Religion Means to Me," has been reprinted, together with another on "The Man You'd Like to Be." in a little volume of less than one hundred pages. It should be of interest to all lovers of Guest's verses, of whom there are multitudes, and may well be used among them by our New-Church friends to direct attention to the New-Church teachings.

B. A. WHITTEMORE.

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**What My Religion Means to Me.* By EDGAR A. GUEST. Chicago: The Reilly & Lee Co. 1925. 79 pp., 16mo. Cloth, 75c.

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